AUTHORITY, LEADERSHIP, AND PEACEMAKING:
THE ROLE OF THE DIASPORAS
A Pilot Study of a Group Relations Conference
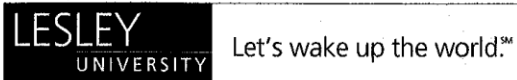

A DISSERTATION

Submitted by

TRACY WALLACH

In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

Research suggests that conflicts are much more likely to re-ignite in societies which have large Diaspora communities in the United States. This study examines the role of American Jewish, Arab, and other Middle Eastern Diaspora communities in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and addresses the generally neglected role of trauma and emotions in perpetuating conflict.

The project employed group relations conference methodology to conduct the inquiry. A group relations lens allows one to look at the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at multiple levels: on the psychological level (looking at issues of trauma, identity, collective narrative, emotions and unconscious processes); on the social level (looking at inter-group relations); and on the political level (examining the role of leadership, authority and power dynamics). A pilot conference, *Authority, Leadership, and Peacemaking: The Role of the Diasporas* was convened April 16-18, 2010. Surveys and interviews were administered before and after the conference in order to examine the impact of the conference on participants. The conference evaluation addressed the following questions: what did participants in the conference learn about the conflict? How did conference participants perceive their individual roles and the collective roles of their respective Diasporas in perpetuating the conflict there? What part might these conferences play in helping participants, as members of their respective Diaspora communities to contribute to the peace process? What processes/variables are at work during the conferences and afterwards that contribute to participant learning and action?

The dissertation describes the particular innovations and adaptations made to the group relations conference model; the ways in which the pre-conference and conference

dynamics mirrored the dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; research design and preliminary findings up to three months post conference. Recommendations for future conferences on the topic are made and implications of the findings for group relations are discussed.

In loving memory

Jacques Burton Wallach
(1926-2010)

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A project such as this cannot happen without the support of many people, whom I would gratefully like to acknowledge here:

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The A. K. Rice Institute for the Study of Social Systems (AKRI) is a national educational institution that advances the study of social systems and group relations. It has eight affiliate organizations around the US and over 240 associates and friends. The Institute seeks to deepen the understanding and the analysis of complex systemic psychodynamic and covert processes which give rise to non-rational behavior in individuals, groups, organizations, communities and nations. Using experiential and participatory theories and methodologies that derive from the Tavistock tradition, the Institute sponsors group relations conferences, research and publications, professional meetings, and training and application events.

Besod Siach (Israel): Since 1991, Besod Siach, an Organization for the Promotion of Dialogue between Conflict Groups in Israeli Society, has been on the cutting edge of promoting dialogue and innovating methodology for dialogue processes between various conflict groups in Israeli society. Its mission is to transform the antagonistic and intolerant climate within which religious, political, social and ethnic-cultural differences are dealt with in Israel; to promote a pluralistic and democratic value system; and to help leaders from all sides find better solutions to the challenges of mutual co-existence in an evolving Israeli culture.

Group Relations International: GRI promotes consciousness for a just world. Our purpose is to increases awareness, access and applicability of group relations learning on authority, identity, and leadership to wider populations. We do so by supporting the creation of experiences in personal and organizational transformation that serve as a catalyst for social justice action.

Innovative Cultural Education and Training Institute, Inc. (ICETI): The mission of ICETI is to develop, implement, and promote events which increase cultural awareness, serve to bridge the diversity amongst us and strengthen the humanity in each of us. ICETI works to promote the following goals: to create and promote alternative cultural/historical programs and workshops for children and families; to develop and

promote multi-cultural books and materials for children and families; to create and provide workshops for parents and professionals focused on cultural awareness; to network with organizations and groups with similar missions; to evaluate and document the models utilized.

Middle East Non-Violence and Democracy (MEND, Palestine): Middle East Nonviolence and Democracy (MEND) promotes active nonviolence and encourages alternatives to violence among youth and adults throughout Palestine. MEND employs innovative methods, especially with the media, and is widely respected for working with authenticity, professionalism and courage.

MEND is registered in three locations: England (since July 2005) - launched Nov.14 2005 at the London School of Economics; The West Bank/PA areas (since August 2004); Israel (as an "amuta" - since February 1998). MEND has no political affiliations and its sole political goal is to promote peace in the Middle East.

Philadelphia Center for Organizational Dynamics: The Philadelphia Center for Organizational Dynamics (PCOD) is both an independent group relations organization and an affiliate of the A. K. Rice Institute for the Study of Social Systems. It is PCOD's mission to advance the understanding of groups and organizations through the study of their psychodynamic processes. This work is undertaken through research, educational, experiential and consulting activities. PCOD members have experience in a variety of fields, including psychology, business, organizational consulting, and education.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The project described here stems from longstanding personal and professional

interests. On a personal level, it is connected to the development of my Jewish identity in

relation to Israel and Zionism. On a professional level, it is connected to my ongoing

interest in group relations theory and its applications[1]. The study takes an inter-

disciplinary approach to understanding and working with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

While it considers the socio-political history of Israel/Palestine, it also takes into account

the crucial relationship between the region and its Diaspora communities.

This dissertation reports on a pilot study of a group relations conference that took

place April 16-18, 2010. The task of *Authority, Leadership, and Peacemaking: The Role*

of the Diasporas was to bring together members of Jewish and Arab Diaspora

communities in the US to examine their personal and collective roles in contributing to

the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the potential role they might take in peacemaking.

The project also aimed to contribute to the field of conflict resolution by illuminating

some of the Diaspora-homeland dynamics in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and by

addressing the generally neglected role of trauma and emotions in perpetuating conflict.

A group relations lens allows one to look at the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at multiple

levels:

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[1] This method of learning is sometimes referred to as the Tavistock model or approach, as it derives from
the work of Wilfred Bion, A. Kenneth Rice, and others at the Tavistock Institute after World War II. It has
been adapted by Besod Siach, one of the project partners, to facilitate dialogue between communities in
conflict in Israel.

- Psychological level: issues of trauma, identity, collective narrative, emotions and unconscious processes

- Social level: inter-group relations

- Political level: the role of leadership, authority and power dynamics.

Collective identity and narrative are where the personal and the political intersect. As the youngest child of a Jewish father and Lutheran mother, I was raised to be devoutly secular and to distrust organized religious institutions. I was also raised with the idea that anti-Semitism was everywhere and Jews faced discrimination in all aspects of life. While my family was not overtly Zionist, I became one after my first trip to Israel (with my family) in 1973, and spent two subsequent summers in Israel with a Zionist youth group. I recall being made acutely aware of the fragility of the state, the only democracy surrounded by Arab nations, who "wanted to throw us all into the sea." The Arabs and Muslims have many nations where they can belong, I learned, while the Jews have but one. I don't even fully recall where or how I learned these things: I just knew they were true.

While I have always considered my experience and relationship to Israel as somewhat unique, I have come to see it as a manifestation of a narrative much larger than myself. My story very much reflects and parallels the historical relationship between the American Jewish Diaspora, Zionism, and Israel. Rogers (2006) notes that traumatic memories that are actively resisted become "unsayable," but may be spoken through "unconscious re-enactments" (p. 72). Traumas such as war and genocide, which affect whole societies, are beyond words. Such trauma inevitably repeats and may be transmitted to later generations (Rogers, 2006; Volkan, 2001). The trauma gets translated

into a victim mentality. In my mind, this victim mentality seemed somehow inseparable

from my Jewish identity.

The time I spent living in Israel cemented the notion that Judaism and victimhood

were somehow intertwined, and that Zionism and Israel were the solution. This idea is

embedded in the dominant discourse in the Jewish community, which lives on in

everyday discussion. It is a discourse that many Jews in this country implicitly recognize

and understand without necessarily having to think about it. The discourse includes the

following "talking points":

- Israel is the only place where Jewish people can be truly safe.

- The Arabs and the Muslims have many countries, but Jews have only this tiny
  sliver of land.

- There is no partner for peace: Israel wants peace, but the Palestinians consistently
  choose war.

- The Palestinians "never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity,"[2] evidenced,
  for example, by their refusal to accept the "very generous" proposals offered by
  Israel under Prime Minister Ehud Barak.

- Palestinians are not interested in peace and only want to "throw us into the sea."

There are variations on these themes, but the core elements of victimhood and

being under siege and surrounded by dangerous enemies are astonishingly consistent.

They are cogently expressed by AIPAC, the American Jewish Committee, the Anti-

Defamation League, as well as many Jewish congregations, in the US and elsewhere.

They are echoed in non-Jewish Zionist groups, the American media and halls of

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[2] Famously quoted by Abba Ebban

Congress, evidenced by a three billion dollar annual military aid package to Israel, which boasts the world's fourth largest military.

Participation in group relations conferences has been a major force in my own internal transformation of my relationship to my Jewish identity, Zionism, and Israel. This internal work has helped me to recognize the stubborn clinging to the victim narrative in the larger Jewish community. Israel, born in the shadow of the Holocaust evokes the trauma of it repeatedly. The trauma provides rationale for government policies of discrimination against Palestinians within Israel and collective punishment of Palestinians in the occupied territories. At the same time, there is a striking lack of awareness about the traumatic impact of these policies and actions on Palestinians. In the Zionist and Jewish narrative, the aggression is located in "Palestinian terrorists." Jewish victimhood becomes transformed into a sense of entitlement and not being bound by rules. The victim has now become the bully, justifying its actions by laying claim to its victimhood.

Group relations conferences provide a unique structure in which the inter-relatedness of the personal and the political can be examined. I was first introduced to group relations work in 1990 as part of my clinical training to be a group therapist. Over the course of the last three decades, I have participated in numerous group relations conferences, in member and staff roles. Since 1995, group relations work has been central to my professional life, informing both my teaching and consulting work. I served on the boards of both the national group relations organization and the local Boston affiliate (serving as president of the latter). My experiences with group relations conferences and organizations have been rewarding, challenging, and frustrating. Over the years, I have

developed some very clear notions about what I think is effective and problematic in

group relations culture.

All conferences share some common elements:

- Participants examine their behavior as it occurs in the "here and now" of

  the group: group dynamics are not discussed on a theoretical level, they

  are directly experienced.

- The focus on the conscious and unconscious processes: consultants offer

  working hypotheses or interpretations of what they see and think might be

  going on in the group beneath the surface. Aside from these interventions

  and the tight boundaries around time and conference task, consultants

  offer no direction to participants about what should be done.

- The unit of analysis is the group-as-a-whole (as opposed to a particular

  individual or inter-personal interaction): when individual behavior is

  highlighted, it is in terms of the role that individual is taking up *on the*

  group's behalf[3]. Paradoxically, focus on the group-as-a-whole can free the

  individual to explore personal questions and behaviors, without becoming

  defensive.

My experiences convinced me that group relations theory and conferences, with

their focus on authority relations, leadership, and the non-rational processes in groups,

could illuminate processes underlying our often dysfunctional political and societal

systems. Given the pivotal role that group relations conferences have played in my own

personal, professional and political transformation, I wondered whether these methods

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[3] The processes of projection and projective identification by which this occurs are discussed in the next chapter.

might also play a role in transforming the discourse in the US around the conflict which is rigidly polarized, often toxic, and marked by ever hardening positions.

Authority, Leadership, and Peacemaking was inspired by the work of Besod Siach, an Israel-based group relations organization, which has been using the group relations model for almost 20 years to facilitate dialogue between conflict groups in Israel. I first discussed the project with colleagues in Besod Siach in February of 2002, when I was invited to consult at a Besod Siach conference in Israel. They were enthusiastic about being part of a project in the United States which would look at the role of the Diasporas in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In order to introduce their work to the A.K. Rice Institute (AKRI), I arranged for Besod Siach to give a presentation at AKRI's Scientific Meeting in Boston in 2003. It was at this meeting that I received authorization from AKRI to begin planning and fundraising for this conference. Neither AKRI nor Besod Siach had the funds to mount such a conference, so available funds would depend entirely on my own fundraising efforts. My original intent was to turn over the sponsorship and planning of the conference to AKRI once the funds were raised, so that I could serve in a staff consulting role. Over time, I became increasingly invested in the project and in doing the research myself. The project then became a reason for me return to school to obtain a doctorate. The project also evolved from the idea of simply replicating the Besod Siach model to building on it (and addressing some of its weaknesses).

The research addresses the following questions: what do participants in the conference learn about the conflict? How do conference participants perceive their individual roles and the collective roles of their respective Diasporas in perpetuating the

conflict there? What part might these conferences play in helping participants, as members of their respective Diaspora communities to contribute to the peace process? What processes/variables are at work during the conferences and afterwards that contribute to participant learning and action? The research tools (survey and interview protocols) used in this study were piloted at two separate group relations conferences. The survey tools were piloted at a group relations conference convened in January 2008, and the interview protocols were piloted at an international conference held in September 2008. Both tools were revised for use in this conference.

Chapter Two reviews the literature in four areas: first I define large group identity and collective national narratives in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. I provide an overview of the development of both national identities and narratives that includes counter-narratives for each group. The second area explores the Jewish American and Arab American Diaspora communities and the inter-relationship between these groups and their respective homelands, and includes their role vis-à-vis the conflict. The hegemony of the Zionist narrative in the United States, and problems associated with it are also discussed. The third section surveys the conflict resolution literature pertaining to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular. It looks at various models of dialogic interventions that have been used both in Israel/Palestine and with Diaspora communities in the US, and evaluations of the models. Finally, I provide an overview of group relations theory and the conference model, and how it may be applied to the understanding of conflict. I also discuss previous group relations research.

Chapter Three documents the planning, implementation, and data collection activities engaged in by the researcher, project partners, conference directors and staff

before, during, and after the conference. It describes innovations to the group relations

conference model devised for this project, and the complications of taking on multiple

roles in the project. This chapter also describes the survey and interview tools used for

this study. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the role of reflexivity and

participant observation in psycho-social research.

Chapters Four and Five report on data collected before, during, and after the

conference. Chapter Four discusses the planning process and pre-conference dynamics.

Conference dynamics and salient themes are also explored, particularly in relation to the

ways that they mirrored dynamics of the conflict.

Chapter Five reports findings on participant learning, gleaned from interviews and

surveys immediately post-conference, and again three months following the conference.

Chapter Six discusses the findings and considers the implications of this study: for

group relations theory and conference work; for dialogue/conflict resolution work in

general; and for the Israeli Palestinian conflict in particular. I offer my thoughts on future

directions for continuing this work.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

For many decades the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has preoccupied and confounded politicians, conflict resolution scholars and practitioners, not to mention the members of each group, both in the Middle East and in the Diasporas[4]. Rooted in the political Zionist movement at the end of the 19th century and the Arab nationalist movements of the 19th and 20th centuries, it involves both sociopolitical and socio-psychological elements (Dowty, 2006; Salomon, 2004). The sociopolitical element concerns land, governance, independence, military might, water resources, civil rights, economic, political and cultural dominance, etc. The socio-psychological element concerns "a community's sense of identity, the way it perceives itself, the story it tells about itself, its history, the way it portrays its role in the conflict, and its views of its adversary—in short, its *collective narrative"* (Salomon, 2004, p. p. 273). In response to each other and to external events, each side has developed its own narrative discourse defining the conflict, which has evolved over the decades (Adwan & Bar-On, 2003; D. Bar Tal, 1998; Gur-Ze'ev & Pappe, 2003; Kelman, 1999b; Rouhana & Bar Tal, 1998; Salomon, 2004). Miall (2007) notes that it began:

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[4] The word Diaspora means dispersion: it derives from the Greek *diaspeirein* to scatter, from *dia-* + *speirein* to sow. Merriam-Webster online dictionary defines the word as follows: 1 *capitalized* a**:** the settling of scattered colonies of Jews outside Palestine after the Babylonian exile b**:** the area outside Palestine settled by Jews c**:** the Jews living outside Palestine or modern Israel 2 a**:** the movement, migration, or scattering of a people away from an established or ancestral homeland <the black *diaspora* to northern cities> b**:** people settled far from their ancestral homelands <African *diaspora*> c**:** the place where these people live Retrieved March 3, 2008 from: http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Diaspora In this paper, I use the term to describe Jews, Palestinians and other Arabs from other Middle Eastern countries who are living outside of Israel/Palestine. The notion that the Jewish Diaspora refers to all Jews living outside of Israel has been challenged by Shohat (1988).

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…as a nationalist programme on the part of Zionists and resistance to it on the

part of Arabs who lived in Palestine. It then developed into a communal conflict,

then after the establishment of Israel it became an international conflict linked to

an internal conflict, and subsequently it spawned important internal conflicts

among the Israelis and between different groups of Palestinians and other Arabs.

Arab and Israeli nationalisms have defined themselves in relation to each other; in

other words, actors and structure defined each other. The conflict has undergone

drastic transformations and will no doubt undergo more before the conflict

formation is dissolved (pp. 175-176)[5].

With the evolution of the conflict over the past century and the accompanying

politicization of individual and collective identity, the sociopolitical and socio-

psychological elements have become very much intertwined (Moghadam, 1994; Shiran,

1993; Yuval-Davis, 1994). Thus, in order to make any headway in the resolution of the

conflict, both the political and psychological elements must be addressed.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first reviews the literature related to

the development of Jewish and Palestinian national identities and collective narratives.

Narratives serve to define the discourse, providing the emotional fuel that perpetuates it.

They are also, in turn, shaped by the conflict. I begin this section by defining the concepts

of large group identity and collective narrative in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian

conflict. Next, I provide an overview of the development of both the Zionist and

Palestinian national identities and narratives, including counter-narratives in each group.

In the second section, I discuss the Jewish American and Arab American Diaspora

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[5] Miall does not discuss the power asymmetry between Israel, which has achieved statehood through occupation of Palestinian land, and Palestinians, who have yet to achieve statehood.

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communities and the inter-relationship between these groups and their respective

homelands, including their potential role in the conflict. The hegemony of the Zionist

narrative in the United States, and problems associated with it will also be discussed.

The third section explores conflict resolution literature pertaining to the Israeli-

Palestinian conflict in particular. Specifically, I look at various models of dialogic

interventions that have been used both in Israel/Palestine and with Diaspora communities

in the US. I describe problems with the various models, and with the intervention

research. I conclude the chapter with an overview of group relations theory, conference

methods, and research: the approach taken in this study.

Jewish and Palestinian Identities and Collective Narratives

Large Group Identity and the Role of Collective Narratives

Collective narratives, embedded as they are in everyday culture, national and

religious holidays, the media, and school textbooks, play an essential role in the

development of an individual's social identity, as well as in the creation of a shared group

identity (Adwan and Bar-On, 2003; Bar Tal 1998; Rouhana and Bar Tal, 1998).

Volkan (2001) defines large group identity—"whether it refers to religion,

nationality or ethnicity--as the subjective experience of thousands or millions of people

who are linked by a persistent sense of sameness while also sharing numerous

characteristics with others in foreign groups" (p. 81). Individuals hold both a personal

identity and large group identity. However, in times of collective stress, such as economic

crisis, drastic political change, social upheaval or war, it is the large group identity that

takes precedence (Volkan, 2001). Internal differences in the group are minimized in

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relation to the external "other" and each group tends to view the other group

monolithically.

In the context of intractable conflict, collective narratives serve a number of

functions. They:

- Illuminate the conflict situation

- Justify the acts of the in-group toward the enemy, including violence and
  destruction

- Create a sense of differentiation and superiority

- Inspire mobilization and action

- Affect political events by ascribing particular meanings to them

- Contribute to the formation, maintenance and strengthening of social
  identity (Daniel Bar Tal & Salomon, 2006)

Collective narratives encompass the societal beliefs[6] that enable the group to develop the

psychological coping mechanisms necessary to manage in an environment ridden by

conflict. Such beliefs include: beliefs in one's positive self-image, the justness of one's

cause, patriotism, unity, and hopes for peace, along with beliefs about the illegitimacy of

the other's goals; about being victimized by the other, and about security. Societal beliefs

may serve as social defenses[7] against the intolerable feelings that would arise if the

group faced difficult truths about itself. They form a kind of ideology which helps society

develop the solidarity, determination, readiness for sacrifice, persistence, and courage

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[6] "Societal beliefs are the cognitions shared by society members on topics and issues that are of special concern for the particular society and which contribute to the sense of uniqueness of the society's members" (Bar Tal, 1998, p. 4).

[7] Social defenses, originally described by Menzies Lyth (1997), are psychological defense mechanisms which manifest on a collective level. They may be evidenced in projective processes, structures, or rituals that serve to protect a group from intolerable anxiety.

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necessary to endure long-term conflict (Bar Tal, 1998). All societal institutions (cultural,

educational, legal, military, etc.) work in conjunction to support these beliefs. At the

same time, through rationalization of the conflict and de-legitimization of the enemy,

they stir up fear, anxiety, and hatred, which serve to further fuel the conflict. Societal

beliefs and their accompanying emotions may color each group's perception and

interpretation of historical events (Salomon, 2004; Rouhana and Bar Tal, 1998).

Nationalist Narratives

Jewish and Palestinian national identities developed in parallel to each other and

continue to develop in relation to the other. Israeli life, while always centered upon the

military, is increasingly militarized to combat real and perceived threats, and the

Palestinian experience is defined and increasingly limited by Israeli occupation, which

determined borders, and checkpoints. Both national identities are determined by

geographical boundaries that are fairly recent, yet based on elements that go much further

back in history. Both groups had begun to assert a national identity before either had the

trappings of an independent state. Only one (Israel) has achieved statehood. Each

narrative has within it an element of victimization and triumph over oppression and

impossible odds, although it is expressed differently by each (Khalidi, 1997). While there

have been numerous challenges to Zionist ideology, the narrative remains coherent and

retains a strong hold on Jewish communities in Israel and in the Diasporas. In contrast,

Palestinian narratives have been much more fragmented. Three reasons are cited for the

failure of Arabs/Palestinians to create a coherent Arab narrative:

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1. The Arab narrative is fragmented not only across national lines, but also within them, on class and sectoral (e.g., military vs. civilian) lines, varying with changes in Arab political doctrines and strategies.

2. Arab historians failed to disentangle themselves from the Israeli narrative/paradigm.

3. Arab historians have lacked access to documentary and archival material, from which historical scholarship is drawn. Israeli military forces systematically destroyed libraries, municipal buildings containing archival documents and personal diaries. Material not destroyed was taken and stored in Israeli archives, to which Palestinian or Arab historians do not have access. Arab historians have also faced censorship in Arab countries (Jawad, 2006; Khalidi, 2006).

The complex history of the Zionist and Palestinian Liberation movements and the conflict between them has been explored at length elsewhere[8]. A chronological timeline of some of the significant events in the history of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict can be found in Appendix A. Not all parties necessarily agree that particular events occurred, or they may view specific events in entirely different ways. This is demonstrated in Appendix B, which depicts narrative differences of select events from the Israeli and Palestinian perspectives. I begin with a discussion of Zionism, providing a brief historical overview of the movement before outlining the Zionist narrative and accompanying societal beliefs.

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[8] See, for example, Abdo & Lentin (2002); Beit Hallahmi (1993); Khalidi (1997, 2006); Pappe (2007); and Segev (1991, 2000)

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The Zionist Narrative

Zionism was born in 1897 at the first World Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland. It developed in Eastern and Central Europe as an outgrowth of continuing anti-Semitism there and with the inspiration of other European nationalist movements of the 19th century. Zion refers to Jerusalem, and by extension, the whole "Land of Israel" (Eretz Yisrael). According to Jewish theology, the Land of Israel was promised to the Jewish people as part of God's covenant with them. Following the destruction of the second temple in 70 C.E., the Jews were forced into exile. In "the end of days," spoken of by the Hebrew prophets, God will redeem the children of Israel and return them to Zion ("the in-gathering of the exiles"). While initially a predominantly secular movement, Zionism alludes to this messianic vision, which has been used to legitimize the territorial claim to the Land of Israel (Klug, 2006). The notion of what Jewish nationhood entails, as well as the link between Zionism and the Jewish religion has been a matter of considerable dispute within the Jewish community[9].

Within the Zionist movement itself, there has historically been a range of opinion: the Revisionists (followers of Ze-ev Jabotinsky) promoted an expansionist Jewish state encompassing "Greater Israel"; while the Labor Zionists (led by David Ben Gurion) advocated a pioneering "return to the land" in a secular socialist state for the Jews. Other groups envisioned a Jewish enclave in Palestine or another territory[10], without statehood, or a bi-national state in Palestine. The leftist MAPAM party in Israel supported a bi-

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[9] Beit Hallahmi (1993) notes that the Jewish nation lacked two essential components of any national liberation movement: territory and population.

[10] Uganda, Argentina, and Australia were options that were considered (Rouhana, 2006).

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national socialist state until it finally gave up the idea following the 1948 war (Beit-

Hallahmi, 1993).

In the European Diaspora, Zionism was but one of a number of Jewish

movements competing for Jewish support. Jewish ideologies were aimed at either

preservation of Jewish identity or at integration and assimilation into the surrounding

culture. Movements aimed at preserving Jewish identity provided two alternatives:

religious Orthodoxy, or cultural autonomy (with full individual rights and separate

cultural identity), within their existing societies. A few efforts were made to combine

socialism and Jewish nationalism, the most important of which was the Bund. Bundism

directly challenged the socialist credentials of the Zionist movement as counter to

universalist socialist ideology. According to this view, Jewish self-determination should

be achieved in Europe, where they were obligated to overturn the class relations in their

own societies. Anti-Semitism, considered to be a function of the petty-bourgeoisie, would

end with the rise of the proletariat as a political force. While Zionism reviled the weak

Diaspora Jew, Bundism promoted secular Yiddish culture. Liberal intellectual Jews

advocated complete assimilation (indeed, this was the position of Theodore Herzl, one of

the founding fathers of the Zionist movement, prior to his conversion to political

Zionism), while others viewed participation in revolutionary movements as an alternative

to Zionism (Beit-Hallahmi, 1993; Kovel, 2007).

While Zionists used religious discourse and symbolism to legitimize its claims for

a state in Palestine, Orthodox and Ultra-Orthodox (Haredim or "God fearing") Jews in

Palestine and in the Diasporas were staunchly opposed to it (Tress, 1994). Only after the

establishment of the state and the first elections in 1948 did the National Religious Party

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(NRP) join the government (the elected labor party, Mapai, rather than forming a

coalition with right wing revisionist parties chose instead to invite the NRP to join the

government). The 1967 war and the conquest of the West Bank and Gaza, and especially

East Jerusalem served to further facilitate the fusion of religious and national identity.

Since then, the Ultra-Orthodox have become increasingly Zionist as they have used the

Israeli state to gain institutional resources and impose religious practices on Israeli Jewish

society (Yuval-Davis, 2001). Religious Zionists (such as Gush Emmunim—Block of the

Faithful) currently play an important role in the settler movement[11].

The foundational myths upon which the Zionist narrative was built encompass the

following societal beliefs:

- The Land of Israel is the historical homeland of the Jews: Jews were
  forced into exile and have yearned to return for 2000 years

- The Jewish people comprise a nation, and Zionism is the national
  liberation movement of the Jewish nation

- Since their exile, Jews have been subject to anti-Semitism, which has
  taken the form of discrimination, isolation, pograms, culminating with the
  Holocaust

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[11] The movement has been involved in building settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, territories conquered and occupied by Israel since 1967. Gorenberg (2006) characterizes the settlement activity in the years following the conquest of the territories as a series of accidents, resulting from the lack of any coherent policy or strategy on Israel's part in regard to the territories. At the same time, the international community did not put any pressure on Israel to withdraw to the Armistice lines. The modus operandi of militant Zionist groups, beginning in the mid 1970s, was to start settlements, get evicted by the Israeli Defense Forces, only to return. The cycle would continue to repeat itself until the government allowed the settlers to stay. In this way, settlements have been allowed to multiply in the occupied territories without regard to international law (and in many cases, also against Israeli law) (Gorenberg, 2006; Tress, 1994). The creation of the network of roads and settlements that leave Palestinian towns and villages increasingly isolated from each other, and the building up of the "Greater Jerusalem" area challenges the notion that settlement activity has been "accidental" (Halper, 2006; Mukdasi, 2009).

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- Living in the Diaspora has created an "abnormal" and "parasitic" Jewish existence, with Jews cut off from nature, the land, physical labor, etc.

- The root of the "Jewish Problem" in Europe is in this abnormal life created in the Diaspora

- To be redeemed, and become a "normal" nation, Jews must be returned to the land of Israel: the "ingathering of the exiles"

- The Jewish people can find safe haven only in a Jewish state

- The Land of Israel was essentially un-occupied—"a land without a people for a people without a land." The Zionists arrived in this desolate land and "made the desert bloom."

- While a small indigenous population lived in the land, there was no particular Palestinian culture or civilization in the territory prior to the arrival of the Jews. Golda Meir, a former Prime Minister of Israel has been famously quoted to say "there is no such thing as a Palestinian" (Daniel Bar Tal & Salomon, 2006; Beit-Hallahmi, 1993; Finkelstein, 2008; Segev, 2000; Warschawski, 2005)

The collective narrative serves to maintain internal coherence in a pluralistic culture, with significant intra-group differences of race, ethnicity, culture, religion[12] and class, while maximizing differences with the other (Salomon, 2004). The "other" (i.e., the Palestinians) becomes the receptacle for the intolerable split off[13] elements of the in-

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[12] from secular to ultra-orthodox

[13] In psychoanalytic terms, splitting is a defensive process in which internal conflicts are contained by dividing them into all good or all bad parts. Holding both the good and the bad elements creates a paradox, which threatens internal coherence and creates anxiety. Projection is the process by which the split-off,

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group. Israeli identity has been constructed in direct opposition to both East European

Diaspora culture and to the indigenous Arab culture (Beit-Hallahmi, 1993; Rabinowitz,

2002; Warschawski, 2005).

Societal Beliefs in Israel Today

There is a wide spectrum of political positions within Israeli society today vis a

vis the Palestinians: the political right, continuing the tradition of the pre-state

Revisionists, advocates for state expansion to encompass all of "greater Israel" (including

the Palestinian territories) requiring "transfer" of the Palestinians. At the far political left

of the spectrum is the anti-Zionist perspective, which advocates a bi-national state with

full civil rights for all its citizens (this comprises a very small percentage of the Israeli

Jewish population, though for many years was the predominant choice for the

Palestinians); with the "two-state solution" somewhere in the center[14]. Despite the wide

range of political opinion, the following societal beliefs continue to dominate the Israeli

(Jewish) narrative, particularly the public face presented to the global community:

- Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East

- The people of Israel long for peace, yet are surrounded by Arab countries

  that are intent on her destruction: "They want to throw us into the sea"

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intolerable elements are dis-owned and deposited onto the other. Defense mechanisms can be mobilized on an intra-psychic, inter-personal, group or inter-group level (Wallach, 2006).

[14]With the exponential increase of Israeli settlements in the West Bank, that continued throughout the peace process, under the leadership of the left wing Labor Party, many scholars have concluded that the two state solution is no longer a viable one. Indeed, some suggest it was neither viable nor the intent of the Israeli government to fulfill (Abunimah, 2009; Aruri, 2009; Barghouti, 2009; Benvenisti, 2009; Ghanem, 2009; Pappe, 2009a, 2009b). During the 2009 war on Gaza, Israeli public opinion polls showed that the majority of Jewish Israelis were in favor of the actions taken. This fact, in conjunction with the installation of a far right wing government in 2009, demonstrates that an increasing proportion of the Israeli population has moved to the political right (Murray, 2009; Pappe, 2009a, 2009b). Surprisingly, some in the settler movement on the political right, are now beginning to advocate for a one state solution, granting citizenship to Palestinian residents. What that citizenship would entail, is not entirely clear.

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- Israel's military actions are entirely for self-defense and aimed at protecting her from terrorist attack. The IDF (Israel *Defense* Forces) is the "most moral army in the world."

- Arabs/Palestinians only understand the language of force (Rouhana, 2006).

- The Palestinians have many Arab/Muslim countries where they can go. The Jews have but one state to call their own.

- "The Palestinians never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity." Israel has offered the Palestinians, as well as the surrounding Arab states many opportunities to make peace, and each time they have chosen war. The most recent example, at the July 2000 Camp David Summit, was Arafat's refusal of Prime Minister Ehud Barak's "very generous offer" to the Palestinians as brokered by President Clinton in his last days in office (Finkelstein, 2008).

These societal beliefs have informed and colored the collective narrative, in which the conflict has become a central part of Israeli Jews' self-definition. Convinced that the Arabs are intent on destroying the Jewish state, "indeed, that its own destruction is inherent in the other's ideology (Kelman, 1999, p.589)," the narrative accentuates Israeli victimization[15]. At the same time, the Zionist narrative minimizes Israel's contribution to Palestinian suffering. Paradoxically, despite the central role of the victim mentality within Israeli historiography and public discourse, "weakness" has been viewed with contempt in Israeli culture. In Zionist discourse, the weak Diaspora Jew would be

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[15] A variation of the victim theme can be seen in the Palestinian narrative, discussed later in this chapter.

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transformed into a new Israeli—strong, masculine, even Aryan[16] (Saposnik, 2003;

Warschawski, 2005). The revisionist faction of the Zionist movement was greatly

influenced and inspired by European fascism (before the Holocaust), with its masculine

ideals of toughness, militarism, and order (Beit-Hallahmi, 1993).

Historical events have become interwoven with and are framed (and re-framed)

by the collective narrative and societal beliefs that inform Jewish identity. For example,

Israel's military history is framed in terms of the danger to Israel's survival and Israel's

victimization by stronger, more powerful enemies. The dominant Israeli discourse about

the War of Independence depicts a fledgling young state that is attacked on all fronts by

more powerful, aggressive neighbors. The David vs. Goliath scenario has been

challenged by new historians who note that despite the public discourse about the danger

of a "second Holocaust," the Zionist leadership was aware that the Arab armies were no

match for their superior forces (Pappe, 2007). The 1967 war is framed in similar terms,

even though it was Israel that struck preemptively and quickly overwhelmed its enemies.

Internal Dissent

Since the founding of the State of Israel, dissident viewpoints have been largely

silenced or marginalized[17] (Motzafi-Haller, 2005). Challenges to the dominant Zionist

narrative have come from the "new historians", Palestinian scholars, and most recently

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[16] The derogatory "savonette" (bar of soap) has been used in Israel to describe people who weren't "tough enough": the term references what Nazis did with the fat of Jews massacred at death camps (Warschawski, 2005).

[17] There have been an increasing number of crackdowns on Israeli Jewish dissenters as well as Palestinians. In May 2009, Yisrael Beitenu (Israel Our Homeland), the far right wing party led by Israeli foreign minister Avigdor Leiberman proposed a bill in the Knesset that would prohibit Nakba commemorations. He has previously called for Palestinian Israelis to take loyalty oaths to the state of Israel (Reuters, 2009).

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from Mizrahi feminist scholars[18]. The notion of Diaspora or exile as an abnormal

condition for the Jews has been challenged on a number of fronts. Beit Hallahmi (1993)

notes, that contrary to the dominant narrative, the Diaspora has been part of Jewish

history long before the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E. A Jewish Diaspora

thrived in Mesopotamia and Egypt as early as the 6th Century B.C.E. Others note that

historically, Jews have been most successful (and safest) in pluralistic societies or in

Muslim countries. That the Jewish population in Israel continues to fear for its survival,

and that Diaspora communities particularly in North America continue to thrive,

contradicts the notion that world Jewry can only find a "safe haven" in a Jewish state

(Beit-Hallahmi, 1993).

Zionism is being re-defined as a settler-colonialist movement rather than, or in

addition to its characterization as a national liberation movement (Abarjel & Lavie, 2009;

Said, 1979/2000; Warschawski, 2005). New historians have uncovered the role of Israel's

founding fathers in the deliberate and systematic expulsion of Palestinians from their

homes, and in the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians, before and after the Israel's War of

Independence[19]. This contrasts to the Zionist narrative that the "tragic" Palestinian

displacement was an unintended outcome of the War of Independence, fought only when

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[18] For examples of new historians, see Segev (2000); Gorenberg (2006); Pappe (2007). Palestinian scholars include Said (1978, 2000), and Khalidi (1997, 2006). Mizrahi and feminist criticism can be found in Abdo and Lentin (2002); Behar (2008); Lavie(2008); Motzafi-Haller (1998, 2000, 2001, 2005); Shohat (1988, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2006); Yosef (2006).
Mizrahi refers to Jews who have originally come from Arab and North African countries. Mizrahi Jews are also sometimes referred to as *Sephardim* (from the Hebrew word for Spain) to describe Jews who lived in the Iberian Peninsula, until their expulsion in 1492. *Ashkenazi* (from the Hebrew word for Germany) refers to Jews who have come from Central and East European countries, where the Zionist movement originated. It has been suggested that Ashkenazi Jews are descendants of Khazars who were converts to Judaism, rather than the twelve tribes, and therefore had no legitimate claim to the land of Israel.
http://www.apfn.org/thewinds/library/khazars_2.html
[19] Referred to as the "Nakba" or catastrophe, by Palestinians

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the beleaguered nation was attacked on all sides by surrounding Arab nations (Beit-

Hallahmi, 1993; Pappe, 2007; Segev, 2000).

Feminist and Mizrahi Challenges to Zionism

Feminist critical analysis challenges masculinist notions of the state and of

citizenship which accompany militarization (Joseph, 2000; Mohanty, 2003, 2006). These

analyses have asserted that nationalist projects and narratives have used women (as

biological reproducers of ethnic national collectivities) to propagate patriarchal societal

ideals (including the proper role and behavior of women). In such societies, women's

roles as wives and mothers may become "fetishized." That is, the "proper" role and

behavior of women is elevated to be a matter of community interest and scrutiny: women

come to symbolize the community (Moghadam, 1994; Papanek, 1994; Stasiulis, 1999).

Sered (2000) illustrates how patriarchal institutions in Israeli Jewish society (the religious

establishment, the medical establishment, and the state) collude and compete for control

over women's bodies[20]. Collective responsibility as cultural reproducers of "the nation" is

attributed to women, while men hold collective authority. Having responsibility without

authority is, according to Sered, what makes women sick[21].

Beginning in the 1970s, feminist scholars began to address gender inequalities

within Israel, though often from an Ashkenazi perspective exhibiting orientalist[22] bias

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[20] Sered notes that each institution has its own vision of and agenda for women's bodies: for religious establishment, it is purity and modesty; the state requires fertile women's bodies to bear and raise the next generation of citizens; the medical establishment understands women's bodies to be especially prone to disease and in need of expert management.

[21] " Israeli women's poor health is rooted in the institutionalization of gender patterns that consistently and programmatically deny women access to power, while at the same time holding them responsible for the continuity and purity of the collective" (Sered, 2000, p. 169).

[22] Said (1978) defines "Orientalism" as a Western construct which defines Oriental or Eastern identity in opposition to that of the West: "one is the absolute and systematic difference between the West, which is rational, developed, humane, superior, and the Orient, which is aberrant, undeveloped, inferior" (p. 300).

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(Dallalfar, 2009; Motzafi-Haller, 2001; Raday, 2001; Roffman, 2009; Swirski, 1993; Swirski & Safir, 1993). Israeli identity evolved in opposition to the notion of the weak (feminized) Diaspora Jew (as well as the feminized Arab/Oriental culture), and the society has become an increasingly masculinized and militarized. Feminist critique in Israel challenges the veracity of the notion of egalitarianism that has infused the Zionist socialist narrative. For Jewish women in the Israeli state, citizenship is constructed primarily through their family roles as wives and mothers. Personal status issues and the private lives of women fall under the jurisdiction of religious courts[23]. Religious courts control marriage, divorce, and child custody issues (Swirski, 2000). In Israel, the deference to religious courts (Jewish, Christian, and Muslim) has resulted in patriarchal norms and values being enshrined into the law. When secular and religious laws come into conflict, women may waive some of their civil rights (e.g., to property), because they are dependent upon religious courts in matters regarding their personal status (Raday, 2001). Jewish religious courts are increasingly under the control of the Ultra-Orthodox (Gorenberg, 2008).

Within the feminist discourse, Mizrahi feminist scholars have challenged the hegemony of the Ashkenazi perspective that has dominated the Zionist narrative by examining the experience of Mizrahi and Sephardi Jews in Israel. Between the 1940s and 1960s, there was a large influx of Jews from Arab countries. From 1949-1950, 49,000 Yemenite Jews were brought to Israel and 114,000 Iraqis immigrated to Israel in 1951.

Thus, Orientalism can be viewed as a projection of the West's unwanted elements. Oriental studies have been used by the West to justify European occupation and colonization. Said suggests the relationship between the colonizing West and the Orient was sexualized, as the Orient was often depicted in feminine/feminized terms: "The Middle East is resistant, as any virgin would be, but the male scholar wins the prize by bursting open, penetrating through the Gordian knot..." (p. 309)

[23] Similarly, personal status issues for Muslims and Christians also fall under the jurisdiction of their respective courts.

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Zionist historiography depicts the aliyah[24] of Arab Jews in orientalist terms: Arab Jews

needed to be *rescued* from oppressive and *primitive* conditions in their countries of

origin, and required *modernization*. The names given to the operations that brought in

these groups, such as "Operation Magic Carpet," or "Operation Moses" are further

indications of the paternalistic attitude of the Ashkenazi Zionist leadership towards the

Jewish Arab immigrants.

Mizrahi feminist scholars have brought to light the complexities of Arab Jewish

immigration to Israel, calling into question the amount of free will Arab Jews actually

exercised in coming to the country[25]. The failure of European immigration to Israel and

the wish for Jewish labor to replace Arab agricultural workers led to the decision to bring

in Sephardic and Mizrahi workers in large numbers. Zionist activists worked to promote

fear[26] amongst the Jewish population in Arab countries in order to encourage them to

emigrate, while secret agreements were made between Arab and Israeli leaders. The

dominant discourse, as propagated by the Ashkenazi leadership, viewed Arab-ness and

Jewish-ness as mutually exclusive. Absorption and acceptance into Israeli society (with

its European orientation) required denial and suppression of their Arab culture (Abarjel &

Lavie, 2009; Lavie, 2009; Motzafi-Haller, 1998, 2000, 2001, 2005; Shohat, 1988, 2001,

2002, 2003; Yosef, 2006).

The multiplicity and complexity of identities in Israel have sometimes put

feminist and nationalist discourses at odds with each other. Dominated by Ashkenazi

women, feminist groups have often not recognized or addressed particular concerns and

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[24] Immigration to Israel is referred to as aliyah—from the Hebrew word meaning to ascend, or to go up.
[25] Indeed, in 1929, the Chief Rabbi of Iraq denounced Zionism and the Balfour Declaration.
[26] This included the use of terror tactics to create panic and disorientation.

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inequalities faced by Mizrahi women. Mizrahi groups, who might find natural allies in

Palestinian groups, with whom there is a cultural affinity and shared experience of

discrimination in Israel, have split along lines of nationalist discourse. Conflicting

identity loyalties (i.e., to one's gender group vs. one's national group) have resulted in

fissures between respective liberation movements. There is a thin line between

'oppressed' and 'oppressor': groups that are 'oppressed' in the context of the larger

Israeli society, may become 'oppressors' vis-à-vis other 'oppressed' groups[27]. These

fissures have negatively impacted the capacities of these groups to more effectively

challenge the hegemonic Zionist discourse (Lavie, 2009; Shiran, 1993; Swirski, 1993).

Abarjel and Lavie (2009) cogently explore dilemmas faced by Mizrahim whose

"Arabness" has been denied or exoticized in Israeli society, while at the same time they

are co-opted into the Ashkenazi Zionist establishment. Mizrahi activists trying to forge

alliances with Palestinians face criticism and anti-Arab sentiment (and cries of "death to

the Arabs") within their own community.

Palestinian Narratives

Development of Palestinian Identity

From the beginning, Palestinians struggled for acceptance and legitimacy of their

national identity. Development of Palestinian national consciousness dates to the early

twentieth century, when the region was still under the rule of the Ottomans. Their

national consciousness developed in response to external threats, but was rooted in a

long-standing concern for Jerusalem and Palestine as sacred (Khalidi, 1997). At that time,

the emerging identity of Palestine was comprised of multiple loyalties: to religion, the

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[27] Ashkenazi women vis-à-vis Mizrahi women, Mizrahim vis-à-vis Palestinians, etc.

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Ottoman state, Arabic language, the emerging Arabism, as well as country, local, and familial loyalties. With World War I and the fall of the Ottoman Empire, two elements of that identity faded: Ottomanism and religious affiliation. Palestinian identity was further shaped by Zionism, in opposition to the Jewish-Israeli narrative, and continues to unfold and reconfigure itself in the context of historical events (Khalidi, 1997).

With communication advances (in the form of trains and the telegraph) in the 1800s, the Ottoman Empire was able to more firmly control its provinces. Until then, Palestine had been under the control of local tribal, sectarian and feudal leaders. Ottoman institutions in Palestine (educational, legal, etc.) were modernized and secularized. Religious/Islamic learning was no longer privileged as it had been. Western influence and literacy increased, leading to the formation of middle and professional classes. With the pressure for modern education, private schools burgeoned, and different educational systems developed throughout the Mandate. By the close of the Ottoman era, the terms "Palestine" and "Palestinians" were used increasingly in the Arab press (Khalidi, 1997). During the British Mandate period which followed, Palestine was the Middle East territory seen as being the most ready for statehood, and its residents were issued Palestinian passports (Akram, 2009).

The Palestinian narrative consists of foundational myths, as well as components related to the Nakba (Jawad, 2006). Foundational myths consist of the following elements:

- Palestinians are people with an ancient and deeply rooted history in the land

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- Palestine is a melting pot of nations, tribes and cultures over the centuries: Canaanites, Jebusites, and Philastines are lineal ancestors of Palestine (Khalidi, 1997)

- Jewish presence on the land was marginal, even in biblical times, and absent for 2000 years.

- As part of the Arab world and civilization, Palestine has played an important role in human progress

- Jews were part of this civilization and have always been treated with tolerance.

- Jerusalem is important in Muslim history and religious practice, playing a crucial role in the early Islamic period (Jawad, 2006)

There is wide acceptance of the above elements, though there are some differences between elite versus popular culture in the Arab world and in Palestinian society. There is general agreement that responsibility for the refugee problem belonged to the Western powers: especially Great Britain for establishing a Jewish state in an Arab land, and the Zionists/Israelis who ethnically cleansed the Palestinians from their homes. There is greater disagreement in the Arab world with regard to 1948 (referred to as al-Nakba, or the Catastrophe). There is no consensus regarding the role of Arab armies (as a whole, as well as particular states) in Palestinian displacement, or the relative strengths of military and civilian authorities (Jawad, 2006). Khalidi (1997) notes that Palestinians aided the Zionists through: selling land to them, failing to organize Palestinian society to overcome differences to stop the sales, and failing to win concessions from the British. The surrounding Arab states have been criticized for colluding with the Zionists on the one hand and reacting to the actions of Zionists and the state of Israel with a "dogmatic brand

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of Arabism" where Israel was viewed as a tool of the West. Freedom of expression was

curtailed and   reference to Israel in print was prohibited. Censorship led to a

consolidation of police states and human rights abuses were committed in the name of

fighting Zionist aggression (Said, 1979/2000).

From 1948 and through to the mid 1960s, outsiders saw few manifestations of

Palestinian nationalism. During that time, the hegemonic ideology throughout the Arab

world was pan-Arabism, that is, the notion that Arabs are a single people, with a single

language, history and culture, which have been divided by imperialism. Palestinians led

pan-Arab organizations that were aimed at liberating Palestine. The pan-Arabist

movement culminated with Nasser's rise to power in Egypt, but lost its appeal with

Palestinians as a result of the harassment of Palestinians in Gaza[28] by Egyptian

intelligence. Nasser's pro-Palestinian rhetoric was now viewed more cynically.

Nevertheless, seeds were being planted for the nascent Palestinian nationalist movement

(Khalidi, 1997).

In 1950, the Union of Palestinian Students was started at Cairo University by a

student who came to be known as Yasser Arafat. At around the same time, George

Habash formed a group at the American University of Beirut and other groups sprang up

in Gaza. By the mid 1950s, a network of grassroots groups had formed, though they were

small and often had their own agendas. After 1967, the Movement of Arab Nationalists

(MAN) transformed from being a pan-Arab organization to one of the main Palestinian

militant groups—the PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine). Its main rival

was Fatah. (Khalidi, 1997).

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[28] then under Egyptian rule

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Khalidi (1997) posits three stages in the development of Palestinian identity. Prior to World War I, the new elite of urban, literate and educated middle classes, along with traditional notables shared the notion that there existed a unique Palestinian identity. Stage two began following the trauma of World War I. During the years of the British Mandate between the world wars, a sense of having a shared fate broadened the numbers of people exposed to the idea of Palestinian identity. These ideas were transmitted through both the newly modernized educational system and the press. Stage three commenced in 1948. The Nakba erased many gaps between previously fragmented groups, diminishing the importance of many pre 1948 conflicts. The United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA) further leveled the playing field by providing education in all refugee camps. Shared trauma, brought on by their new refugee status, along with callous treatment by Israel and Arab host states further cemented Palestinian identity (Khalidi, 1997).

The Palestinian narrative, like the Zionist one, is replete with stories of heroism and survival against overwhelming odds, such as: the revolt of 1936-39 against the British and the Zionists; and stories of Palestinian villagers ("the heroic peasant") holding off overwhelming Jewish forces in 1948. One such case was the battle of al-Karama in March of 1968: in response to guerilla incursions into Israel, several brigades of Israeli troops attacked Fatah military bases in the abandoned Jordanian town of al-Karama. The battle of al-Karama was "a case of failure against overwhelming odds brilliantly narrated as heroic triumph" (Khalidi, 1997, p. 197). After a day of fighting, 28 Israeli soldiers were killed (much more than expected) and the Jordanians captured several Israeli tanks. While Israel achieved most of its military objectives, and Palestinians also incurred

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significant losses, the Palestinians nevertheless viewed the battle as a symbolic victory.

Yasser Arafat gained hero status. The narrative highlights martyrdom in battle while

downplaying the mistakes and overall disorganization and losses suffered by Palestinians.

After the battle, thousands of Arabs throughout the Middle East volunteered to join the

fight for liberation. Over the next decade, they were joined by young European leftists,

who had mobilized against the Vietnam War, and now took up the Palestinian cause and

violent methods in fighting for it (Khalidi, 1997; Tolan, 2006). Following an Israeli

crackdown on Palestinians in 1969, Abu Laila and others split off from the PFLP. Taking

a more moderated stance, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)

advocated co-existence, and saw the battle as one against Zionism, not against Jews

(Tolan, 2006).

The narrative of "failure as triumph" (Khalidi, 1997) was further developed by

Palestinian nationalist organizations that later took over the PLO (Palestinian Liberation

Organization[29]). In 1974, the PLO was recognized by the Arab League as the "sole

legitimate representative of the Palestinian people," and was granted observer status in

the United Nations ("Background briefings: Who represents the Palestinians officially

before the world community?," 2006-2007).

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the PLO and Palestinian nationalism suffered a

number of political and military setbacks, failing to examine or learn from its political

mistakes (Said, 1995/2000). In 1970, the PLFP committed a series of air hijackings,

leading to a few weeks of bloody battles in Palestinian refugee camps between the

Jordanian army and Palestinian factions (PLO, PLFP, DFLP). In September of that year

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[29] which had been formed by the Arab League in 1964

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(later known as "Black September"), the Jordanian army expelled the PLO from Jordan.

The PLO was also drawn into the war in Lebanon in 1975-6, provoking Syria, a former

PLO ally, to intervene against the PLO and its Lebanese supporters. Phalangist and allied

militias, backed by both Israel and Syria, invaded three Palestinian refugee camps near

Beirut massacring and expelling their inhabitants. Over the next few years there was a

series of intense clashes, many involving the PLO. This culminated in a massive Israeli

invasion of Lebanon and siege of the PLO in Beirut in the summer of 1982[30]. The PLO,

the Palestinian civilian population and the Lebanese suffered heavy casualties[31]. The end

result was the expulsion of Palestinian leaders and institutions to Tunisia, Yemen, Sudan,

Syria, Iraq, and Libya. The narrative of failure as triumph enabled the Palestinians "to

make sense of a troubled history which involved enormous efforts against great odds

simply for them to maintain their identity as a people" (Khalidi, 1997, p. 199).

Disillusionment with PLO leadership in the 1980s (particularly amongst

Palestinians in the Diaspora) resulted in the emergence of a counter-narrative. More

Palestinians questioned the choices made by their leaders and fewer felt loyal to the PLO

leadership in Tunis. In 1983 Syria supported a revolt within Fatah[32]. The popular uprising

("intifada" in Arabic), which began in December 1987 in the occupied territories caught

the PLO leadership off-guard, while boosting the flagging Palestinian national

movement. The PLO later joined in supporting the intifada, though Palestine, rather than

the Diaspora became the center of Palestinian politics once again (Khalidi, 1997).

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[30] Massacres at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps occurred in September.
[31] estimated at 19,000 killed and 30,000 wounded (Khalidi, 1997)
[32] The main faction within the PLO, headed by Yasser Arafat

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After the Oslo Peace Accords in 1993, the PLO was replaced (domestically) by

the Palestinian Authority (PA)[33]. As a result, the Palestinian elite returned from exile and

resettled in the West Bank and Gaza, causing further strain between Palestinians and their

leadership (Nabulsi, 2009). The PA, led by Yasser Arafat and the Fatah party, was

riddled with corruption (Aburish, 1993; Nusseibeh & David, 2007; Rabinowitz, 2000,

2005). Furthermore, the accords failed to slow Israeli settlement activity in the West

Bank, which burgeoned in the period following the signing of the accords. This further

eroded support for the PA and the accords (though Palestinians still favored peace)

(Rabinowitz, 2005; Said, 1995/2000, 2003). Arafat enjoyed a surge of popular support in

2002, when Israel re-invaded parts of the West Bank and laid siege to his compound in

Ramallah[34]. When he died in 2004, he was replaced by Mahmoud Abbas as head of

Fatah.

Corruption continued to plague Fatah, and in January 2006, the Palestinian

Legislative Council elections (which had been postponed from July 2005) resulted in the

victory of Hamas over Fatah[35]. Following this outcome, the US, European Union (EU),

Russia and UN (the "Quartet") demanded that the new Hamas government renounce

violence, recognize Israel's right to exist, and accept the terms of all previous

agreements. The Hamas government refused, instead offering a ten year ceasefire with

Israel. In response, the Quartet shut off aid (~ $2 billion) to the PA, and Israel clamped

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[33] The PLO retained responsibility for foreign affairs and is a signatory on all treaties (Becker, October 2007)

[34] As with Israeli Jews, Palestinians too tend to unite when under attack from the outside. The outside enemy distracts from internal conflict.

[35] Hamas was established by Sheikh Ahmed Yassin and others following the eruption of the first intifada, and has roots in the Muslim Brotherhood (a Sunni religious and political organization established in Egypt in 1928). Israel initially supported the growth of Hamas as a counterweight to the PLO. Yassin was arrested during the 1987 intifada and held until 1997. The Israelis assassinated him in 2004. (Becker, October 2007)

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down further on Palestinian freedom of movement, particularly in Gaza. Israel detained

64 Hamas officials, including Legislative Council members. After the kidnapping of

Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, Israel launched a new military campaign in Gaza. The United

States continued to pressure President Abbas to dissolve the Hamas government,

promising (but not following through on) an $86 million aid package to dismantle

terrorism and restore law and order (Murray, 2009; D. Rose, 2008; Shlaim, 2009).

In 2007, violence again broke out between the two Palestinian factions, with the

storming of Islamic University of Gaza by Fatah forces and Hamas retaliation. Under the

auspices of King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, a power sharing deal was struck to establish

a National Unity government, where Ismail Haniya of Hamas remained Prime Minister,

and Fatah members would hold important posts. Nevertheless, tensions between the

groups continued, erupting with street battles in Gaza and resulting in the Hamas

takeover of Gaza while Fatah maintained control of the West Bank. Israel continued its

blockade of Gaza, (depriving its residents of basic needs such as electricity, water, and

medicine), bringing the strip to the brink of humanitarian disaster. Israel invaded Gaza in

January 2009[36] (Becker, October 2007; Murray, 2009; D. Rose, 2008; Shlaim, 2009).

Since 2008, several attempts have been made by the Free Gaza movement (see Appendix

E) to break the blockade. In May of 2010 Israeli forces attacked the "Gaza Flotilla" (a

group of ships organized to bring humanitarian aid to Gaza) killing nine Turkish activists

(one of whom was also a US citizen), and wounding dozens of others. The tragedy has

kept the plight of Gaza in the headlines, and brought unprecedented worldwide

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[36] 1434 Palestinians were killed, including 960 civilians. Thirteen Israelis killed, including three civilians and soldiers who died from "friendly fire". (retrieved April 16, 2009 from: http://www.btselem.org/english/OTA/?WebbTopicNumber=30&image.x=8&image.y=8)

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condemnation of Israel[37]. There has been equally strong pushback from Israel, and from

establishment Jewish organizations to the events, which continue to unfold[38].

Societal Beliefs amongst Palestinians Today

Why haven't the Palestinians achieved statehood after all these years? Khalidi

(2006) attributes this failure to both external and internal factors. During the Mandate, the

British had already begun to construct an "iron cage." At the end of World War II,

Palestinian leaders were highly critical of both the British and Zionist colonial forces, but

themselves made a series of devastating errors, setting the stage for decades to come. In

the larger Arab world, the Arab street was sympathetic to the Palestinian plight, but their

governments often colluded with Israel in order to further their own domestic and inter

Arab political agendas. For their part, Palestinians learned to play the Arab regimes off

each other (Khalidi, 1997).

Palestinians today are split geographically into four groups: Palestinian citizens of

Israel; Palestinian refugees (including those living in camps in Lebanon and Jordan);

Palestinians living in the occupied territories—the West Bank and Gaza—who may

themselves be refugees from 1948; and the Palestinian Diaspora, living in the Arab states

and in the United States (Abunimah, 2009; Bisharat, 2009; Brown, 2006). Given the

geographical and political splits, it should not be surprising that today, there is little

consensus amongst Palestinians regarding resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, or

what they envision for the future of their homeland. The vision each group espouses for

the future has largely depended on where they ended up: constituencies within Palestine

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[37] Increased Israeli aggression against Gaza also exacerbated the splits within the American Jewish community.

[38] Retrieved June 24, 2010 from http://www.freegaza.org/en/home/press-releases.

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tend to be against the creation of a new bi-national state. Within Israel Palestinians favor

equal rights within the Israeli state, while the majority of Palestinians within the occupied

territories prefer a two-state option: many cannot conceive of continuing to live with their

oppressors. Refugees wishing to return to Palestine support de-facto a one state solution,

as that would be the result of their return (Karmi, 2009); in the Diaspora, the majority of

Palestinians want a single binational state. Formal messages from Palestine to the world

have been and continue to be contradictory, reflecting the internal fragmentation of

leadership [39] (Karmi, 2009).

    Within Israel, a new generation of Arab/Palestinian political leaders is emerging,

with a proliferation of explicitly Arab political parties (both nationalist and Islamist) and

NGOs, representing a growing national consciousness. They also mirror the internal

fragmentation, a result not only of Israel's efforts to weaken new leaders, but also as a

result of continuing traditional structures, such as extended families, a culture of notables

(seen in the personalization of institutions), and patriarchy—especially the political

exclusion of women (Jamal, 2006). Nabulsi (2009) understands the fragmentation of the

Palestinian body politic as part of a de-democratization process that has been occurring

since the Oslo peace process. Palestine lost many of its democratic traditions through

both the design of its institutions and the processes and practices utilized. She posits that

elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council were themselves one of the biggest

causes of the de-democratization process. Scholars suggest that Palestinians have many

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[39] In 1974, the PLO promoted a clear political position in favor of a single secular, humanistic state for Palestinians and Jews, it has since 1974, along with the Palestinian Authority (which replaced the PLO following the Oslo accords) promoted de facto the two state option, while other groups speak of a one state solution (Karmi, 2009).

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issues to address in order to develop a coherent national narrative and identity, including:

exploring what is meant by statehood; examining the values Palestinians should embrace,

including the place of human rights; and deciding how to address the presence of

Jews/Israelis in Palestine who wish to retain their Jewish/Israeli identity (Brown, 2006;

Farsakh, 2009).

The Role of the Diasporas

The Formation of Diasporas

In recent years as ethno-national Diasporas have increased in visibility and

political importance 'Diaspora Studies' has become a legitimate field of inquiry (Sheffer,

2006). The numbers of ethno-national Diasporas have grown significantly, and ethnic

minorities have gained greater legitimacy in Western democracies. This has been further

enhanced by the break-up of the Soviet Union. Diasporas form as a result of both

voluntary and imposed migration to one of many host countries. Diaspora communities

are frequently involved in acute conflicts not only in their homelands and host lands, but

also in third and fourth countries where their ethnic groups reside (Sheffer, 2006). While

ethno-national Diasporas[40] vary greatly, they share a number of features. Sheffer (2002)

constructed a profile of Diaspora communities, which concerns their decision to settle in

the host country; their level of integration and assimilation into the host society; the

establishment of organizations; and questions of divided loyalties.

The Decision to Settle

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[40] Large groups of migrants who later become the predominant group (e.g., the English in the US, Canada and Australia) are not categorized as ethno-national Diasporas, even if they maintain a cultural affinity or ties with the country of origin.

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The critical formative stage in the creation of a Diaspora occurs only after migrants

overcome the initial shock involved in leaving their homeland and settling in a new host

country. Most migrants decide only *after* arriving in their host country about whether to

permanently settle there and join an existing Diasporic entity or to help establish one.

These decisions are based on both emotional and rational considerations. Occasionally,

migrants stay only temporarily in the intended host country and may be forced to move to

another one due to restrictions on permanent settlement or because of economic, political

or social difficulties. Members of migrant groups must decide about the main strategy

they will pursue vis-à-vis their host society and government, homeland, and their

Diasporas elsewhere (Sheffer, 2002). Peteet (2007) argues that Palestinians don't fit the

classic profile of a Diaspora, lacking both a sense of hope and new beginnings as well as

the communal formations--elites and new institutions that define Diaspora.

Integration and assimilation vs. minority status and separation

How well migrants integrate and assimilate into their host societies and the level

of cohesion and solidarity of their group is dependent both on the migrants, as well as the

host country. Differences of generation, class, education, and ideology need to be

overcome to develop a cohesive community. Memories of being uprooted from the

homeland, the hardships of settlement in a new country, the welcome they received from

the host society, ties to the homeland, and decisions made about their future result in

increased solidarity among members of these groups. As minorities in their host countries

ethno-national diasporas may potentially be expelled, or face social, political and

economic hardships and alienation. Members of Diaspora communities may also fully

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assimilate into the host societies, resulting in demographic losses to the communities

(Sheffer, 2002).

Divided Loyalties

Diasporic communities may potentially feel (or be perceived as feeling) divided

loyalty between their homeland and host country. Occasionally, this real or perceived

dual loyalty may cause tensions with the host country, prompting homelands to intervene

on behalf of their Diasporas or likewise demand that "their" Diaspora express unswerving

loyalty to the homeland and render services to it. Elaborate intra-state and trans-state

networks may be developed in order to facilitate exchanges (such as the transfer of

resources) between the homeland and the Diaspora. They may also be conduits for illegal

and criminal activities, including terrorism, and to supply weapons and money transfers.

Thus, Diaspora communities are pre-disposed to become involved in conflicts with their

homelands, their host countries, and other international actors (Sheffer, 2002).

Organizing

The establishment of organizations is essential in the establishment, maintenance

and revival of Diaspora communities. Without them, Diasporas cannot survive or thrive.

Diasporic organizations function on many levels: at the local community level, looking

after the cultural, social, political and economic needs of the community; at the level of

host country's societies and governments, complementing services offered by the host

society; and on the trans-state level, extending aid to their homelands. Yet, only certain

core segments of the migrant groups become deeply involved in the operation of such

organizations (Sheffer, 2002).

Sheffer (2002) writes that state-linked Diasporas are interested in cooperating

with their host societies and governments, whereas members of stateless Diasporas tend

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to be more militant, adopt separatist strategies in regard to their homeland, and disregard rules in their host countries. Most members of Middle East Diasporic communities try to maintain their ethnic identity, pursue moderate policies and integrate into their host economic and political systems, while still maintaining their own voluntary associations and organizations, to complement those of the host nation (Sheffer, 2002).

In the US, both Jewish and Arab Diaspora communities share some of the characteristics described above, but they differ greatly in terms of their level of organization and cohesion, reflecting the dynamics in their homelands. As will be discussed further below, the Jewish American community exhibits a high degree of organization and cohesion (along with an organizing dissident group), with many institutions promoting the Zionist perspective, and high degree of investment in Israel. In contrast, the Palestinian and other Arab Diaspora communities have been much slower to organize politically, though they have begun to mobilize in the last few years. The level of financial investment in Palestine does not begin to approach that of the Jewish community (Gillespie, Sayre, & Riddle, 2001). The Jewish community has been described as a "classic Diaspora," while the term Diaspora poses problems for Palestinian communities. Palestinian refugees may lose their legal status (and right of return) if they become citizens of another country (Peteet, 2007). Below, I describe the characteristics of each of these Diasporas in the United States. I attempt to delineate the dynamics within each of them, as well as between the Diasporas and their respective homelands.

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The American Jewish Diaspora, Zionism, and Israel

With six million people, the American Jews make up the largest Jewish Diaspora community in the world, and the most prosperous in history (Beit-Hallahmi, 1993)[41]. It is also the oldest and best organized Diaspora connected to a Middle Eastern country, and since 1948, to an independent state. The United States is Israel's strongest supporter, and the American Jewish Diaspora has been very influential in shaping U.S. foreign policy with regard to Israel. In this way, it has had a direct influence on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The relationship between the Jewish Diaspora in the United States and the state of Israel has a long and complex history, about which much has been written. Israel continues to have an enormous influence on American Jewish identity[42] (Saposnik, 2003; Second thoughts about the promised land," September 21, 2007; Segev, 2000; Shain, 2000, 2002; Shain & Barth, 2003; Shain & Bristman, 2002; Sheffer, 2002).

Today, it is not possible to discuss American Jewish identity out of the context of its relationship with Israel, or to examine Jewish identity in Israel without making reference to its relationship to the American Jewish Diaspora. The two groups have mutually influenced each other since the founding of the state of Israel in 1948, and increasingly since the 1967 war. Such influence encompasses questions of religious identity, which in turn helps to shape secular and nationalist identity and ultimately, the direction of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Saposnik, 2003; Shain, 2000, 2002). While many Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox Jews, both in the U.S. and in Israel were anti-Zionist

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[41] Slightly outnumbering the number of Jews living in Israel. The number of Israelis living outside of Israel is also increasing.

[42] The American Jewish community has often been perceived as a homogeneous entity: usually as white, Ashkenazi, financially well-off, and Zionist. In actuality, the Jewish community in the United States is very diverse, in terms of race, ethnicity, culture, religious practice, and political affiliation (Dallalfar, 2009; Kaye/Kantrowitz, 2007).

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in the early days of the Yishuv and statehood, many secular Jews embraced Zionism as a

substitute for religious observance and as a way of staying connected to their Jewish

identity and the larger Jewish community (Yuval-Davis, 2001).

Following the six-day war of 1967 and through the 1970's, American Jewish

identity became increasingly bound up with the state of Israel. Pro-Israeli organizations

were established nationwide, and traditional Jewish-American institutions placed greater

emphasis on Israel. Israel became the unifying force in an increasingly diverse and

pluralistic Jewish population in the United States. This has been attributed to a number of

factors: first, many Jews felt great pride at the Israeli victory as "a redemption from the

image of the weak Jew" (Shain, 2000, p. 180). Second, the Orthodox, viewing victory as

fulfilling a messianic prophecy, moved away from their previous opposition to Jewish

nationalism and increased their political activism. Finally, identity politics became a

greater factor in American society overall, as other liberation movements (women's

liberation, gay rights) growing out of the civil rights and anti-war movements, began to

take root in the US in the 1960s and 1970s (Gamson, 1991; Gamson & Meyer, 1996;

Moghadam, 1994). Changes in the relationship between Jews and their former civil rights

movement allies over differences concerning Israel as well as other issues also played a

role. Identification with Israel led to the transformation of Jewish education and religious

practice in the US: Israel took a prominent position in curricula of Jewish schools, and

Israeli flags were displayed and prayers for Israel said in worship services (Shain, 2000).

These practices have resulted in an increased blurring of boundaries between

Judaism (the religion), Zionism (the political movement) and the state of Israel. This has

manifested in confusion in the public discourse, where the three terms are often used

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inter-changeably. This occurs both within and outside the Jewish community. In the

2006 Annual Survey of American Jewish opinion sponsored by the American Jewish

Committee, 74% of respondents agreed with the statement that "caring about Israel is a

very important part of my being a Jew[43]." Another poll noted that the majority of

American Jews pay very close (55%) or somewhat close (37%) attention to the situation

in the Middle East[44]. There is a growing minority within the American Jewish population

which is attempting to differentiate between Judaism and Zionism, and which is critical

of the Israeli state. Organizations representing this minority are listed in Appendix C.

American Diaspora support for Israel continued almost unchallenged through the

1980's. Even when there was disagreement, American Jewish groups were loathe to

criticize, much less intervene in Israeli policy[45]. This may be due, in part, to the

intervention of a number of well established elite Jewish organizations: the Jewish

Federation(s), American Jewish Committee (AJC), Anti-Defamation League (ADL),

Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC), and AIPAC (American-Israel Public

Affairs Committee) are among the better known. These organizations are highly

organized and well funded. Together, they have quite successfully promoted the Zionist

narrative—both within the Jewish community and in foreign policy. AIPAC boasts that it

is among the most influential lobbying organizations in the United States [46].

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[43] American Jewish Committee 2006 Annual Survey of American Jewish opinion, retrieved October 20, 2007 from: http://www.ajc.org/site/apps/nl/content2.asp?c=ijITI2PHKoG&b=2174431&ct=3152893

[44] Americans for Peace Now and the Arab American Institute Survey of Jewish American and Arab American public opinion by Zogby International in 2007. Retrieved October 21, 2007 from http://btvshalom.org/resources/Poll_20070522_26_APN_AAI_Survey.pdf

[45] As noted by Sheffer (2002), the home country may also demand unswerving loyalty from its Diaspora community.

[46] http://www.aipac.org/

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The blurring of boundaries between Jewish religion and Jewish nationalism has been facilitated by Israeli leadership, since the founding of the state[47]. The conflation of the two has become increasingly problematic, as opposition to, and outrage at Israeli policies has been increasingly directed at Jewish communities outside the state of Israel. Continuation of such policies may put Jewish communities around the globe at even greater risk, contrary to the Zionist promise of a safe haven.

The American Jewish Diaspora community has played a vital role in perpetuating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict[48] (Shain, 2002; Shain & Barth, 2003). Diaspora influence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has taken many forms: providing direct financial support to Israel[49] (Sheffer, 2002), including direct support of illegal settlements and outposts (Rutenberg, McIntire, & Bronner, 2010); immigration to Israel[50]; and funding pro-Israel candidates for U.S. political offices through Political Action Committees (Shain, 2000). The most influential Jewish lobby groups in the United States (e.g., AIPAC) have tended to align with the Israeli right wing (consistent with policies of neoconservative groups in the US) and the Zionist narrative described earlier ("Second thoughts about the promised land," September 21, 2007; Soros, 2007).

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[47] During the Oslo peace process, right wing Jewish groups aligned with conservative lawmakers to try to get Congress to adopt initiatives to undermine Israeli-PLO negotiations. Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres told American Jews to stay out. At this point, American Jewish organizations began to look inward at their own identity and development. Jewish organizations have tended to get more involved with Israel when Israel faced crises (Shain, 2000).

[48] It has also made some contributions to the peace process, as in the pre-Oslo period when left-leaning American Jews promoted contact with the Palestine Liberation Organization (Shain & Bristman, 2002).

[49] The World Zionist Organization's Settlement Division provided the Israeli government with funding for settlement activity in the occupied territories (Gorenberg, 2006). American Jewish philanthropic organizations are also increasingly contributing to Palestinian NGOs in Israel (Haklai, 2007).

[50] Many of the most zealous settlers in the West Bank come from the United States ("Second thoughts about the promised land," September 21, 2007). Further, 80% of American immigrants to Israel are Ultra-Orthodox, while only comprising 10% of the Jewish population in the U.S. (Shain, 2000)

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There is a diversity of political viewpoints within the American Jewish community that reflects political differences in Israel. However, those who dissent from the dominant Zionist narrative are not well tolerated[51]. Dissenters, both non-Jewish (Carter, 2006) and Jewish (Finkelstein, 2001; Kovel, 2007; J. Rose, 2005; Rothchild, 2007) have faced charges of anti-Semitism or of being "self-hating Jews"[52]. Two prominent Jewish American academics (Finkelstein and Kovel) have lost their academic appointments or bid for tenure as a result of their anti-Zionist writing. The former was banned from Israel for ten years when he tried to enter the country in 2008[53] (Bannoura, 2008).

The conflation of anti-Semitism with anti-Zionism is inextricably linked to societal beliefs and collective narrative about Jewish victimization. Such beliefs are intrinsic to the Jewish identity. The publication of Mearsheimer and Walt's (2006) article and follow-up book (2007) on the Israel lobby created enormous controversy within the Jewish community and in the general public. Mearsheimer and Walt argue that the Israel lobby exerts enormous influence on U.S. foreign policy throughout the Middle East. They assert that the consequences of these policies (one example being the Iraq war) are damaging to U.S. national interests and to Israel's security. Plitnick and Toensing (2007) take issue with Mearsheimer and Walt's contention that the Lobby was a deciding factor

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[51] i.e., those that are anti-Zionist, or even "pro-Israel" voices that are critical of the occupation or other Israeli state policies

[52] Coined in the literature as the "new anti-Semitism" (Beller, 2007; Brownfeld, 2007; Reinharz, 2007; Rosenfeld, 2006)

[53] Organizations such as CAMERA (Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America) www.camera.org , Campus Watch http://www.campus-watch.org , and The David Project, www.thedavidproject.org promote the Zionist narrative on college campuses and in the media and attack media outlets, professors and others who offer alternative views and criticize the State of Israel. The newly minted Americans for Peace and Tolerance http://peaceandtolerance.org/ , is headed by Charles Jacobs, who also co-founded CAMERA and the David Project.

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in the Iraq war (though its position is certainly aligned with Bush administration foreign

policy). Foreign policy decisions, they contend, are not rooted in a deep solidarity and

love of Israel. Rather, they assert that the U.S. has used Israel as a proxy in the cold war

and is now using Israel to neutralize Iran. Finkelstein (2001) asserts that historically, the

established "elite" Jewish community in the United States has always "acted in lockstep"

and colluded with (non-Jewish) right wing organizations against left wing Jews (e.g., the

McCarthy witch hunts), in order to assimilate and secure their position in American

society. The shift in attitude of American Jews towards Israel was, he contends, fully in

line with U.S. policy.

Peace activists and scholars have become increasingly vocal in speaking out

against Israeli policies vis-à-vis the Palestinians, U.S. policies that facilitate the

occupation, and the conflation of anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism (Lerner, 2007; Plitnick

& Toensing, 2007; Remnick, 2007; Soros, 2007). There is a growing peace movement

within the American Jewish community, which has been reported to represent the

majority of Jewish opinion (Plitnick, 2007a, 2007b, October 17, 2007). Nevertheless, it

still lags far behind established Jewish organizations and Jewish groups subscribing to

neo-conservative ideology in terms of organization, fundraising capacity, resources, and,

most importantly, political influence. Appendix C provides a partial listing of American

Jewish organizations engaged in peace advocacy work. They range from "pro-Israel"

groups, such as J Street advocating a two state solution to Palestinian solidarity groups,

such as Birthright Unplugged that challenge the Zionist notion of a Jewish right to return

to the State of Israel. A number of groups include Zionist, non-Zionist and anti-Zionist

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members that advocate an end to the occupation, but do not advocate any particular

political solution (one vs. two states).

The Palestinian and Arab Diasporas in the US

The Palestinian community is one of a number of Arab communities in the US.

There are approximately 250,000 Palestinian Americans, comprising about a quarter of

the Arab American population, and five percent of the Palestinian Diaspora worldwide.

Like the American Jewish community, the Arab Diaspora in the United States is

religiously (Christian and Muslim) and ethnically diverse. While there were Jewish

settlers in the US as far back as 1654, sizable numbers of Arab immigrants came to the

US only in the late 19th century. Reasons for Arab immigration included: tensions over

economic and social transformation brought about by the end of the Ottoman Empire,

periodic famine, drought and blight, and the 1860 massacres of Druze and Maronites in

Lebanon. Arab immigrants came to the United States in three waves: the first wave came

from Syria and Lebanon between 1878 and 1924, was ninety percent Christian and

immigrated primarily for economic reasons. The second wave arrived from Palestine and

Jordan, between 1948 and 1966. This group was sixty percent Muslim and comprised of

generally well educated and wealthier immigrants trying to escape war and upheaval in

their homelands. The communities of these first two waves kept separate and distinct

from each other until the wars of 1967, 1973, and 1982. The third immigration wave from

1967 to the present included immigrants from several countries came in the context of

several wars in the region: the 1967 war and occupation of the West Bank and Gaza

Strip; wars in Lebanon, Iraqi wars with Iran and Kuwait, and US wars in Iraq (Orfalea,

2006).

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       The Arab American community has been slow to organize politically, and Arab

American organizations have operated largely in the social arena. Organizations that had

been concerned with the Middle East tended to be short-lived and not well subscribed.

There are a number of reasons for this: reluctance of the immigrant community to stand

out in their host society; differential experiences in migration (e.g., whether they

immigrated voluntarily or were forced out of their home countries); and cultural

similarity or dissimilarity with American society. In addition, conflicts between regimes

in the immigrants' countries of origin may have made it difficult for Arab Americans to

find common ground on the issue of Middle East policy alone (Orfalea, 2006).

       Earlier immigrant waves were primarily concerned with assimilation (Orfalea,

2006). Arab American Christians who descended from Lebanese-Syrian immigrants

missed the pan-Arabism movements of the 1950s were least likely to develop a

politicized ethnic identity and aimed first to achieve fuller integration (Wald, 2008). Later

immigrant waves were less easily absorbed. Muslims and those who were displaced by

Arab-Israeli wars and civil conflicts within Arab states (and who had a less benign

reception in the US, and were more culturally dissimilar) were more likely to organize

politically along ethnic lines (Wald, 2008). These two trends—towards assimilation and

submersion of ethnic identity on the one hand, or towards greater identification as a

separate group on the other—have continued[54].

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[54] Part of the community advocated obtaining minority group status, in order to receive the "privileges" of
other minority groups. In 2000, the US Census form offered a voluntary ethnicity box for the first time, and
1.25 million Arab Americans checked it. It backfired in the atmosphere of fear following 9/11, when this
data was sent to the US Customs Service and the Department of Homeland Security (Orfalea, 2006).

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　　　　Organizations addressing their concerns as residents of the US tend to be Arab

based rather than Palestinian[55]. Even so, there have been only three national membership

groups that were sustained for more than two decades: AAUG, the National Association

of Arab University Graduates; the ADC, the Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee; and

NAAA, the National Association of Arab Americans. By 2003, only the ADC remained,

after merging with the NAAA[56]. The 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon spurred

unprecedented Arab American activism, while the subsequent massacres at the Sabra and

Shatila refugee camps (committed by Arabs against other Arabs) resulted in a

precipitous decline (Orfalea, 2006).

　　　　Anti-Arab sentiment, already ingrained in American popular culture, has become

more prevalent and even acceptable in the US since 9/11 ("Reel bad Arabs: How

Hollywood villifies a people,")[57]. However, surveillance of Arab Americans began long

before the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center. During the first Gulf War hate crimes

in the US against those of Arab origin (or believed to be Arabs) hit record highs[58].

Workplace and home harassment continued with the passage of the USA Patriot Act in

October 2001(Orfalea, 2006). This, along with the deterioration of conditions for

Palestinians in the Occupied Territories has spurred greater activism in the past few years

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[55] Palestinian communities in the United States formed village based associations, such as the Ramallah federation or al-Bireh club. Aside from PLO, it has been difficult to find a cohesive and overarching Palestinian organization in exile (Peteet, 2007).

[56] A partial listing of Arab American organizations can be found in Appendix D.

[57] Most Arab Americans believe that overwhelmingly pro-Israel US policies in the Middle East are directly connected to the 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center (Orfalea, 2006).

[58] Between 1979 and 1985, there were six violent incidents that were traceable to the JDL (Jewish Defense League—an extreme right wing Jewish militant organization associated with the late Meir Kahane). There were 39 documented hate crimes in 1990 (where there had been four prior to Iraqi invasion of Kuwait). In 1991 there were 119 hate crimes. Attacks on Arab Americans (or those believed to be Arab) increased after the Oklahoma City bombings in 1995 and the 1996 anti-terrorism act which followed. One hundred fifty hate crimes were committed against Arab Americans in the aftermath of Oklahoma City. There were 700 violent incidents against Arab Americans in year after World Trade Center attacks—most of which occurred in the first three months (Orfalea, 2006).

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(Murray, 2009). A partial listing of Palestinian solidarity organizations (whose

membership may also be open to non-Palestinians or non-Arabs) can be found in

Appendix E. Nevertheless, the Zionist narrative continues to retain its hegemony in both

public opinion and government policy.

The Hegemony of the Zionist Narrative

How has the Zionist narrative retained its hegemony in the discourse of the

Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the United States? According to Palestinian American

scholar Edward Said, the West has denied Palestinians "permission to narrate" by 1)

labeling them as terrorist 2) labeling critics of Israeli policy as anti-Semitic and 3)

denying the historical and lived reality of the Palestinian homeland. The terrorist label

justifies everything the US and Israel does, while delegitimizing anything the Palestinians

do (Said, 1984/2000).

The hegemony of the Zionist discourse can be seen in the media which is

overwhelmingly "pro-Israel" in its perspective (Murray, 2009), and is also manifest in US

policy towards Israel. Since 1985, Israel has received nearly $3 billion dollars annually in

grants from the US, and is the largest cumulative recipient of US foreign aid since WWII

(Sharp, 2008). In contrast, US aid to the Palestinians averaged $75 million per year

during the 1990s. The average has increased since 2000, but has fluctuated with the

second intifada and with the growing role of Hamas in Palestinian politics (Zanotti,

2009).

There have been some noticeable shifts of late in the media discourse, particularly

since the Israeli invasion of Gaza in December 2008 to January 2009, and the attack on

the Gaza Flotilla in May 2010. A 60 Minutes report on the lives of Palestinians under

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occupation in Gaza (Simon, 2009), blogs, and op-ed pieces (R. Cohen, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c, 2009d; Kristof, 2010) showing the Palestinian perspective are increasing, though they are still greatly outnumbered by the "pro-Israel" forces (Bennis, 2009; Hijab, 2009; Lynk, 2009; Murray, 2009). Political activity has increased substantially among other Arab Americans and Muslim Americans since 9/11, which may be attributed to the continuing US occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan, and accompanying increase in anti-Arab sentiment and actions at home (Hijab, 2009). Israel's increasingly brutal military occupation and the United States' continued pro-Israel policy has mobilized the Palestinian community. The Gaza invasion has further buttressed political mobilization, evidenced by protests and demonstrations in cities across the United States, and a strengthened boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) movement (Murray, 2009). Despite increased mobilization and subtle changes in the mainstream media's reporting on Israel/Palestine, the Zionist narrative retains its hegemony vis-à-vis US foreign policy.

The Role of Trauma

Volkan (2001) contends that massive trauma involving dramatic "losses of life, property, or prestige, and/or humiliation by another group" (p.11) can result in regression in the whole society. Societal regression functions to protect or repair a sense of group identity. It is characterized by, among other things, "the loss of individuality, extensive use of projective mechanisms, leading to a sharp division of "us" and "them", and a sense of entitlement to do anything in order to maintain its shared group identity"[59] (Volkan,

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[59] There are a number of examples of this in the last few years: in March of 2008, Qassam rockets fired from Gaza were aimed at the Israeli town of Sderot. Longer range rockets landed as far as the town of Ashkelon. Exercising its "right to self defense," Israel responded with a massive retaliatory strike, resulting in the deaths of over 100 Palestinians, many of whom were children. ("Israel pulls troops out of Gaza," 2008). The sense of entitlement rooted in trauma can be seen in a quote by Israeli foreign minister at that

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2001, p. 11). He further asserts that the failure to adequately work through the trauma and mourn these losses can lead to the transmission of the trauma to later generations. The trauma and stories around it become embedded in the collective narrative of each identity group. This happens on both the individual and the collective level. The less contact there is between the two communities, the more space there is for mutual projective processes. The building of the "separation" wall has further cut off contact between Israelis and Palestinians.

In Israel and the United States, the traumatic history of anti-Semitism and the Holocaust continue to haunt and shape Jewish identity and narrative vis-à-vis other groups in the global community. Paradoxically, the Holocaust only became such a deciding factor in the American Jewish narrative *after* Israel's show of strength in the 1967 war, leading to the creation of what Finkelstein (2001) refers to as "the Holocaust industry." Anxieties continue even with the enormous economic, social, and political success of the American Jewish community overall. In Israel, terror attacks continue,

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time, Tzipi Livni, who said: "I cannot accept condolences saying that there are victims on both sides. Well yes, there are victims on both sides, but there is no moral equation between these terrorists who are looking for civilians to kill and the Israeli soldiers who are looking for the terrorists." (quote from Jewish Peace News, March 4, 2008). This perspective has also been prevalent throughout the British and American press. The January 2009 Israeli invasion of Gaza resulted in the loss of 1434 Palestinians, most of whom were civilians. On March 20, 2009, a small group of extreme right wing Israelis were allowed to march through the Palestinian town of Um al Fahem, where, 3500 Israeli riot police used tear gas and bullets to control the resident Palestinians who threw stones). A number of scholars warn that these actions signal a disturbing escalation in Israeli violence that will result in an ethnic cleansing at the level of the 1948 Nakba (Barghouti, 2009; Ghanem, 2009; Hijab, 2009; Murray, 2009; Pappe, 2009b). This has been born out: in 2010, the Israeli government has been cracking down on Palestinian non-violent activities, and even human rights groups in Israel (such as B'Tselem) that are concerned with Palestinian civil rights. There had been little mention of this in the American media until the May 31, 2010 Israeli attack on the Gaza Flotilla, a group of several ships carrying humanitarian aid to Gaza (including food, medical, and building supplies). The attacks, and demonstrations against the attacks across the US and Europe remained in the media (unusually), even weeks after they occurred. Israeli officials have defended the attack by saying that their soldiers were acting in "self defense" against the "terrorists" aboard the Turkish ship Mavi Mamara. By labeling the activists as "terrorists," the government justifies its use of violence. As of this writing (in mid June, 2010), nine activists are reported dead, and several remain missing. It remains difficult to verify the narratives of either side, since the Israeli government confiscated all cameras and video equipment from the activists.

though they are greatly reduced. Every attack re-ignites fears of being "thrown into the sea." The fact that the country maintains the strongest, most technologically advanced armed forces in the region (and is, indeed, one of the most powerful in the world) does not allay the fear. The fear serves as justification for increasingly brutal crackdowns on Palestinians under the guise of self-defense. A majority of the Israeli population approved of the Gaza war as necessary to Israeli self-defense (Luban, 2009; Murray, 2009). When Palestinians respond to Israeli provocations with violence, they confirm Israeli fears that they are terrorists. Each act of violence provides "proof" of the correctness of the group's narrative, creating a rationale for counter-attack, and thus perpetuating the cycle of violence. Such beliefs are not subject to rational explication of the facts.

For Palestinians in Israel and the Occupied Territories, the trauma is ongoing. Palestinians within Israel were subject to military rule until 1967 and continue to face ongoing discrimination at all levels of Israeli society today. A majority of those Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza have never experienced life free from military occupation, which has become increasingly brutal. Generations of Palestinians have been traumatized by an increasingly militarized and militaristic Israel (Rabinowitz, 2005; Said, 1995/2000, 2003). The full extent of the trauma and its impact has yet to be played out but will undoubtedly impact generations to come.

Memorials to Jewish victims of Palestinian attacks and to Palestinian martyrs who died on behalf of Palestinian liberation dot the landscape of Israel and Palestine. While state memorials can play an important role in helping individuals and societies to grieve and move on, in Israel/Palestine, they serve as a daily reminder of each group's victimization and the danger of the other, providing additional fuel to feed the conflict.

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Identity, Peacemaking, and the Diasporas

To develop a sustainable peace, conflict resolution and co-existence initiatives need to target de-legitimization of the other and address the conflict between the two narratives. Any peacemaking efforts or final political arrangements with regard to drawing political boundaries must be accompanied by processes which address the dominant societal beliefs, collective narratives and identities, impacted by massive societal trauma. Perception of the other (particularly dehumanization and perceived threat) can lead to public support of retaliatory aggressive policies, and public opinion does influence government policy in conflict situations (Brandt, Colaresi, & Freeman, 2008; Maoz & McCauley, 2008).

Gur-Ze'ev and Pappe (2003) argue that the construction of one group's national identity necessitates the destruction of the "collective memory of the other." Thus, Israeli identity depends on the negation of Palestinian identity, and legitimizing the Palestinian narrative would detract from Israel's own legitimacy. Israeli acceptance of the Palestinian Nakbah would mean taking responsibility for its role as a perpetrator (not just a victim) of violence. Salomon (2004) suggests that "accepting somebody else's narrative need not mean either agreeing with it or abandoning one's own narrative. It means only the acknowledgement of the narrative's "right to exist," accepting its validity on its own terms" (p. 278). In today's polarized discourse, this will be exceptionally difficult, but is a necessary first step towards reconciliation and healing.

Acknowledgement of the past implies that there are two (legitimate) narratives of the conflict. This recognition is an important factor in reconciliation since the collective memories of each party about its own past underpin the continuation of

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the conflict and obstruct peacemaking. Through the process of negotiation, in

which one's own past is critically revised and synchronized with that of the other

group, new narratives can emerge (Daniel Bar Tal & Salomon, 2006, p. 39).

Societal beliefs, collective narratives and identity issues cannot transform without

addressing the trauma and underlying emotions that permeate them.

The conflict is not symmetrical, as Israel's greater military power and greater

ability to produce victims indicates[60]. Nevertheless, *both* sides need to acknowledge the

pain of the other and own up to their own role in the conflict. Only mutual recognition of

wrongs will allow each side to acknowledge that it has been a victimizer as well as a

victim. In order for real peace and reconciliation to be achieved in Israel/Palestine, the

wrongs (even atrocities) that each has committed against the other need to be

acknowledged. (Beit-Hallahmi, 1993; Pappe, 2007; Warschawski, 2005; Wineman, 2003)

Warschawski (2005) notes:

...Peace and reconciliation are incompatible with amnesia; on the contrary, they

demand a truthful re-evaluation of one's own history and an honest self-

examination. Only a sincere and encompassing plea for forgiveness for the crimes

committed can create the conditions of real equality between those who

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[60]The Israeli human rights organization, B'Tselem reports that from the start of the second intifada on September 29, 2000, through January 31, 2008 (until but not including fatalities from Operation Cast Lead), 4791 Palestinians were killed by Israelis (most by Israeli security forces, and most in the occupied territories. During the same time frame, 705 Israeli civilians (471 in Israel proper) and 326 Israeli security forces were killed by Palestinians. Palestinians sustained over four times as many casualties as Israelis. During Operation Cast Lead (the invasion of Gaza in 2008-09), 1397 Palestinians were killed (by Israeli security forces in the occupied territories) while 5 Israeli security forces were killed by Palestinians. Since Cast Lead, 78 Palestinians were killed by Israeli security forces, and a total of 6 Israelis were killed (2 of them civilians). Retrieved June 26, 1010 from: http://www.btselem.org/english/statistics/Casualties.asp?sD=19&sM=01&sY=2009&eD=31&eM=05&eY=2010&filterby=event&oferet_stat=after

> perpetrated the crimes and their victims. It is the essential condition for enabling
>
> peace to become the starting point of a true reconciliation. (p. 207)

Political scientist Matt James (2006) names eight requirements for an authentic political apology, which should: 1) be recorded officially in writing; 2) name the wrongs in question; 3) accept responsibility; 4) state regret; 5) promise non-repetition; 6) not demand forgiveness; 7) not be hypocritical or arbitrary; 8) undertake, through measures of publicity, ceremony, and concrete reparation to both morally engage those in whose name the apology is made and to assure the wronged group that it is sincere (quoted in Corntassel & Holder, July/September 2008, p. 4).

Beit Hallahmi (1993) contends that Israel is haunted (and tainted) by the "original sin" (of colonialism and actions against the Palestinians) in which it was born. Israel's main problem, he contends, is

> to ask for forgiveness, for admitting the injustice done to the Palestinians is so
>
> terrifying that Israelis will try to avoid it at all costs. Their feeling is that if they
>
> admit any guilt, they will be punished severely and mortally, as the magnitude of
>
> their crime warrants. They are afraid of the natives' wish for revenge. (pp. 218-
>
> 219)

Israelis fear that to acknowledge that Zionism was a colonialist movement would destroy the moral justification for the state, and Israelis would lose their rights to live there[61]. He goes on to say that those born in Israel after 1950 have as much right to be there as anyone else, and cannot be held responsible for the crimes of their predecessors.

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[61] Israeli insistence that Palestinians recognize their "right to exist" may be a function of this fear. It may also be seen as a projection, given the resistance of Israeli governments to recognize Palestinian existence as a people.

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However, he maintains, they must be held accountable for what continues to happen

today.

Peace efforts in the region must involve Diaspora communities, particularly the

American Jewish Diaspora. Having played a substantial role in fuelling the conflict, by

providing direct financial or material support, as well as contributing to the emotional

context in which militancy can be sustained, they must be a part of the peace process, if

peace is to be sustainable. A study by the World Bank concluded that after five years in

post-conflict situations,

> ...the risk of renewed conflict is around six times higher in the societies with the
>
> largest diasporas in America than in those without American Diasporas.
>
> Presumably, this effect works through the financial contributions of Diasporas to
>
> rebel organizations. (Collier and Hoeffler, 2000, quoted in Shain and Barth, 2003,
>
> p. 449)

While it is up to the parties in the region to negotiate final political agreements involving

the final boundaries of the state or states, it is essential that the Diasporas be included in

the psychological work of reconciliation and healing. The following section describes

reconciliation and coexistence models that have been used in Israel/Palestine and in their

respective Diaspora communities in the United States.

Dialogic Approaches to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Introduction

The Israeli Palestinian conflict exemplifies what has been defined in the conflict

resolution literature as a "deep-rooted" conflict (Burton, 1987), in that it involves deep

feelings, values, and needs, which cannot be negotiated or settled through force. Other

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theorists referred to such conflicts as "intractable"[62] or "identity conflicts." Mitchell

(1990) notes that conflicts may end in three possible ways: through truce, in which the

underlying issues are not dealt with; through settlements involving both compromise and

abandonment of goals, but in which there may be some hope for a new positive

relationship; and resolution, in which the underlying issues are addressed and a new

acceptable relationship is established. Traditional diplomacy[63] has had limited success in

resolving deep rooted conflicts, and multi-level, multi-track[64] diplomacy has increasingly

been considered essential for peacemaking efforts (Bland, Powell, & Ross, 2006; Fabick,

2006; Fitzduff, 2006; Volkan, 1988, 2006).

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[62] defined as protracted, irreconcilable, violent, zero-sum in nature, total (concerning values and needs considered essential to survival), and central in the preoccupations of societal members (Bar Tal, 1998)

[63] Prior to World War II, conflict resolution was the domain of international relations and rooted in political realism. Political realism is based on the politics of power and the assumption that human beings are biologically pre-disposed to aggression and competition. Because of the human pre-disposition to aggression and self interest, conflict is viewed as a normal state of affairs in international relations. The structure of the nation-state and statesmanship are aimed at controlling this side of human nature. Political and societal interests are defined solely in terms of power and the state has a right to base its policies and decisions on its national interest. Therefore, war is justified as necessary to preserve the vital security interests of the state. In this view, it is appropriate to manage the inherent aggression or lawlessness of states through multi-lateral constraints, such as international institutions with coercive power or the employment of power-balancing and deterrent strategies by great powers (Donnelly, 1992; Morganthau, 1948). The realist approach is critiqued for its downplaying of the role of morality in international relations. Burton revolutionized the field of international relations and conflict resolution with the introduction of the basic human needs approach and introduction of track 2 diplomacy.

[64] Track 1 refers to high level diplomacy between official state representatives; track 2 connotes diplomacy facilitated by conflict resolution experts with mid-level leaders from representative groups; track 3 involves leaders from the business communities of the groups; and track 4 involves meetings of grassroots community leaders (Fabick, 2006).

Track 2 or multi-track diplomacy is rooted in the work of John Burton (1987), an Australian diplomat who worked on conflicts in Malaysia, and who challenged the political realist notion that conflict could be managed through the use of power and control. Basing his approach on Maslow's hierarchy of human needs, he posited that conflict was an outcome of the thwarting of basic human needs. Basic human needs included the need for identity, belonging, security, and recognition. The model has been critiqued along a number of lines. Focusing on human needs may be conflict promoting, as well as conflict resolving. That is, the need for security may manifest as dominance; the need for identity through creation of an outgroup enemy; and the need for belonging or love as a need for admiration, status or success at the other's expense. As a theoretical construct, the notion of "basic human needs" may be viewed differently by different theorists. Basic human needs can be seen as dynamic: that is, when basic material needs are met, individuals and groups may differ about what needs are essential (Mitchell, 1990). Approaches to conflict based on human needs theory have been critiqued for failing to address emotional aspects of conflict, such as underlying trauma (Hicks & Weisberg, 2002).

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In the context of intractable conflicts, track 2 conflict resolution has four goals: accepting the other's narrative as legitimate, critically examining one's own group's acts and contributions to conflict; feeling and showing empathy for others' suffering while building a trust of the other; and finally, getting involved in nonviolent activities (Gawerc, 2006). Well run peace education programs can serve as a barrier against the deterioration of views and feelings in intractable conflicts (Biton & Salomon, 2006). In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, there has been regular and ongoing contact between the two sides over the years, including numerous peace and co-existence initiatives both in Israel/Palestine, and the Diaspora. Such initiatives have taken place on all levels—from official state-level diplomacy to grass roots initiatives. There are a number of studies reporting on peace education programs in Israel. With the exception of Kelman's (Kelman, 1998, 1999a) work on interactive problem-solving workshops, few peace and coexistence initiatives between Arabs and Jews in the Diaspora have been formally studied or evaluated (Gawerc, 2006). There are, however a number of informal reports (Abramovich, 2005; Davis, 2002; Dessel, 2005; Dessel, Rogge, & Garlington, 2006; Halpern, 2006; Sarsar, 2002; Stephan, Hertz-Lazarowitz, Zelniker, & Stephan, 2004).

Approaches to Working with Conflict

Approaches to working with conflict derive from practitioners' theoretical understanding of the nature of conflict, its causes and effects. Encounter or dialogue workshops vary in:

1. Their goals for the encounter

2. Structure or design of the workshop

3. Number or types of participants involved (grass roots to high level leadership to students)

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    4.   Methods used [training, experiential exercises, facilitated dialogue,

         cooperative planning and problem solving (CPPS)]

    5.   Type of facilitation or consultation offered (teaching, confrontation,

         interpretation, etc.).

Goals for these encounters may be prejudice reduction, healing and reconciliation, social

justice/anti-racism, diversity/multi-culturalism, democracy building, or conflict

management (Shapiro, 2006). Fisher (2006) situates the whole range of interventions

under the umbrella of ICR (interactive conflict resolution). He views ICR as an unofficial

approach meant to compliment, rather than replace official diplomatic activities.

      Appendix F provides an overview of the purposes, underlying theories or

assumptions and activities of the models applied to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. For

the purposes of simplicity, I have grouped the models into four categories according to

their primary aims: intercultural educational models; healing/therapeutic models; political

action models; and hybrids. Under the first heading I have grouped a range of models—

grassroots, contact, information, and meta- cognitive, as their primary aim appears to be

education and inter-cultural understanding. The reconciliation and transformation

(Bargal, 2004) and TRT (Albeck, Adwan, & Bar-On, 2002; Bar On, 2000; Steinberg,

2004; Steinberg & Bar-On, 2002; Steinberg & Bar On, 2007) models have healing and

"working through" of trauma as their primary aims. The interactive problem-solving and

School of Peace/Givat Haviva models are all geared towards political action; though they

are rooted in different theoretical traditions and are structured differently. The interactive

problem solving approach, developed by Herb Kelman (1998, 1999a) is rooted in

Burton's (1987) basic human needs approach and attempts to contribute to a more

complex understanding of the issues on the political level by building bridges and

creating (non-binding) agreements to meet the needs and address the fears of all the

parties. Though it aims to address psychological needs, the approach works on a rational

level. The School of Peace/Givat Haviva models (Abu-Nimer, 2004; Halabi, 2004;

Halabi & Sonnenschein, 2004) are more confrontational in nature and explicitly aim to

empower the Palestinian minority, and to educate the Jewish majority. While a well run

encounter program may contain components from all of these categories, each tends to

emphasize one element over the others.

Hybrid approaches have been developed to address some of the critiques of other

models, and may use two or more specific methods (such as interactive problem solving

and TRT) within the same workshop (Babbitt & Steiner, 2006; Desivilya, 2004). They

may also use entirely new methodologies (Hicks, 2007, 2008) that have multiple goals

(such as education, healing, and political action).

The literature reports similar classification systems for Israeli-Palestinian

encounter programs, two of which are described by Suleiman (2004). The first

differentiates the kinds of encounters into three categories: workshops in the human

relations tradition, workshops emphasizing cross-cultural learning, and those based on the

conflict resolution approach. The second system of classification also describes three

different models: the contact model, the information model, and the psychodynamic

model. The contact model is based on the contact hypothesis, which suggests that inter-

group contact will reduce stereotypes and prejudice, if certain conditions are met in the

encounter situation. The information model is similar to the cross-cultural learning

approach and suggests that inter-group relations can be improved and inter-group

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prejudices reduced by providing information, either through media, education or

encounter programs. Prejudice is understood to result from lack of information about the

other (Ben-Ari, 2004), and stereotypes may be modified when participants can obtain

more accurate information in an encounter with the other. The psychodynamic model

views prejudice and stereotyping as a function of projective mechanisms. Psychological

defense mechanisms serve to relieve a group of its anxiety by projecting its unwanted

parts onto the out-group. The different theoretical traditions of these models inform the

goals and structure of the encounter.

Halabi and Sonnenschein (2004) describe a somewhat more complex

classification system, categorizing models of encounter between groups in conflict along

two axes. On one axis is the human relations- conflict resolution continuum: the former

emphasizes psychological aspects of the conflict and commonalities between participants,

while setting conflict issues aside. In contrast, the conflict resolution models start from

the assumption that there is a basis in reality for the conflict, and that the groups involved

need to find ways build bridges between the two groups. Emphasis is on participants'

roles as representatives of their groups, with less emphasis on individual psychologies or

inter-personal relationships. Under this category are interactive problem-solving

workshops (Cross & Rosenthal, 1999; Kelman, 1999a; Rouhana & Kelman, 1994;

Rouhana & Korper, 1997), which bring together "political influentials" to explore

solutions to problems that concern both parties. Participants are asked to describe the

fundamental needs that needed to be met in any agreement, and the fears that would need

to be allayed for the agreement to be acceptable in their communities. The method takes a

very rational approach to working with deep seated emotions and needs underlying

conflict. It may speak to or about needs and emotions—fears, anxieties, etc.— underlying

the conflict, but does not work emotions in the context of the workshop.

Hicks and Weisberg (2002) suggest that the interactive problem solving model

needs to be expanded to address the multiple levels of conflict, including the pervasive

and unacknowledged trauma. Further, the parties need to address not only their own and

the others' underlying needs, but their own responsibility in perpetuating the conflict.

They also suggest that intra-party work needs to be done in order to address hostile

dynamics within each group that may serve to harden positions.

The second axis has the contact hypothesis approach at one end, and the inter-

group approach at the other. The contact hypothesis suggests that creating conditions for

interpersonal interaction between the two groups can reduce stereotypes and hatred. In

contrast, inter-group models suggest that such encounters are only useful when group

identity is emphasized and interactions are of a group nature. The focus is on

empowering the minority and helping the majority get insight into their power

orientation. Only then can the personal experience in the encounter be generalized to life

outside the group. The models used at Givat Haviva (Hansen, 2006) and the School of

Peace at Neve Shalom/Wahat al Salaam (Abu-Nimer, 2004; Halabi & Sonnenschein,

2004; Steinberg, 2004; Steinberg & Bar On, 2007) and Ben-Ari's (2004) meta-cognitive

model exemplify the focus on inter-group, rather than individual or inter-personal

relations. The axes are similar in that the emphasis moves on the continuum from an

intra-psychic or inter-personal focus, to an inter-group level focus (Halabi and

Sonnenschein, 2004). Many researchers conflate the human relations and contact

hypothesis models, and indeed, the authors reviewed here do not offer much description

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to distinguish between the two. In her evaluation of coexistence programs in Israel, Maoz (2004) categorized programs along one continuum, with coexistence programs emphasizing similarities between participants at one end, and confrontational programs, emphasizing difference and conflict, at the other, with hybrid approaches in the middle.

Abu Nimer (2004) notes that coexistence programs in Israel have evolved from the 1950's to 2001. From the 1950's -1970's, the young state and its institutions employed a domination approach to co-existence, aimed at maintaining the status quo. From the 1970's to early 1990's, Israeli governmental institutions and society "discovered" Arab culture and encouraged participation in coexistence activities with a particular focus on intercultural sensitivity and prejudice reduction. By the late 1980's, several organizations began to employ a conflict approach, engaging participants in conflict analysis. Since the Oslo accords of 1993, a number of programs have begun to incorporate aspects of both conflict and intercultural approaches (Abu Nimer, 2004).

There has been little rigorous study of the numerous peace and coexistence initiatives between Jews and Arabs or Jews and Muslims in the United States (Sarsar, 2002; Halpern, 2006; Abramovich, 2005), the majority of which have been (un-facilitated) grass roots efforts[65].

Evaluation of Models and Methods

Researchers disagree as to the importance of affective (psycho-cultural perspective) vs. political engagement (structural perspective) in dialogue encounters. The debate between the two approaches has implications for practice, as "structuralists focus on issues of rights, justice, and political issues, while those taking more of a

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[65] Kelman's interactive problem-solving workshops, while convened at Harvard, invited political influentials from Israel/Palestine, rather than working with Diaspora communities.

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psychocultural perspective have emphasized relationships and the need to work on

eliminating the ignorance, misperceptions, fears, and hostility between the groups, often

through cooperative activities and encounters" (Gawerc, 2006, pp. 437-438). Not

surprisingly, those enamored of conflict resolution and inter-group approaches tend to be

more critical of programs with a psychological focus, and vice versa.

Intercultural education programs (based on human relations or contact theories)

have been critiqued along a number of lines (Abu-Nimer, 2004; Davis, 2002; Hubbard,

1997; Maoz, 2001; Rouhana & Korper, 1997; Yablon, 2007). According to the Contact

Hypothesis, in which many of these approaches are rooted, many conditions need to be

met for the program to have a positive impact. These conditions may be difficult to

sustain, particularly in the volatile environment of the Middle East. One of the essential

conditions for program success is symmetry, both in terms of attendance as well as active

participation of equal numbers from both groups (Maoz, 2004, 2006). While contact

approaches attempt to achieve symmetry in numbers of program participants, they have

been critiqued for neglecting to address the structural realities of asymmetry in power and

resources between the Jewish and Arab Israeli population. In this way they are seen to

perpetuate the status quo (Abu-Nimer, 2004; Fitzduff, 2006; Rouhana & Fiske, 1995;

Rouhana & Kelman, 1994; Steinberg, 2004; Steinberg & Bar On, 2007; Tausch,

Kenworthy, & Hewstone, 2006). The asymmetry may be further reinforced when funding

is provided by the Israeli Ministry of Education or Jewish non-governmental

organizations unwittingly favoring the high power group (Suleiman, 2004).

While many studies suggest that intercultural education encounters can change

negative bias (Hurtado, 2005; Khuri, 2004; Maoz, 2003; Biren A. Nagda, 2006; Biran A.

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Nagda, Kim, & Truelove, 2004; Biren A. Nagda, Tropp, & Paluck, 2006; Biren A. Nagda & Zuniga, 2003; Tausch, et al., 2006), there has been little correlation between personal attitude change and a change in national attitudes (Tausch, et. al., 2006). There has been a tendency for Jewish participants (higher power) to be more interested in discourse on the inter-personal level, while Palestinians have been more interested in group level discourse (Rouhana and Korper, 1997; Suleiman, 2004). Suleiman (2004) suggests that this is connected to the greater importance of group identity for minority groups.

Encounter programs emphasizing similarities and shared humanity may limit the groups' capacity to cope with conflict or negative emotions and have little long-term impact as long as the external context remains the same (Steinberg, 2004; Suleiman, 2004; Abu Nimer, 2004). Few models actually work explicitly with strong affect, or do it well. Thus, negative emotions in the contact situation may have a negative impact on inter-group perceptions (Ben Ari, 2004). In her ethnographic study of an ongoing leaderless Jewish Arab dialogue group in the US, Hubbard (1997, 1999) demonstrates how the group's inability to work with emotions eventually led to conflict avoidance in the group and hindered its work. Also criticized in encounter programs is the lack of facilitator commitment, training, or theoretical grounding and preparation; lack of opportunities for intra-group meetings within the encounter; poor selection process of participants; and lack of follow up (Abu Nimer, 2004; Suleiman, 2004).

Many critics of the human relations/encounter approach point to the School of Peace model as a positive example of encounter programs. However, political action programs such as this one have also been criticized for their emphasis on conflict and confrontation over personal relationships (Maoz, 2004). The inter-active problem solving

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model, with its rational approach to addressing the needs and fears of each group,

neglects the affective work that needs to accompany cognitive insight. The lack of

personal relations in the Givat Haviva and School of Peace encounters may prevent

participants from differentiating and moving beyond their rigid collective perspectives

(Steinberg, 2004). Further, these approaches promote one narrative over the other.

Neither of these models has incorporated large group work into their program design.

Given the particular emphasis on the larger societal context and on inter-group work, this

is quite striking. Indeed, whether focused on developing inter-personal relationships or

creating structural change in society, few programs work with more than 16-20

participants at a time.

Some hybrid approaches have been developed to attempt to bridge the gap

between inter-cultural education models and problem solving approaches. Babbitt and

Steiner (2006) have created a training model that has inter-active problem solving,

consensus building and narrative storytelling (TRT) modules, which may be delivered at

different phases of an intervention. Desivilya (2004) explores an integrated model that

attempts to link systems thinking with conflict resolution approaches. Without a full

description of the process and outcomes, it is difficult to evaluate the model.

The model developed by Besod Siach (Duek, 2001; Sarel, Said, Mayer, & Ben-

Yosef, 2003) shares with the Givat Haviva /School of Peace model some theoretical roots

in systems theories of Bion and Lewin, and in the work of Martin Buber. It also shares an

understanding of the system of the workshop or conference to be a microcosm of the

larger environment. In both, analysis is at the group and inter-group level. Yet, Besod

Siach and The School of Peace have fundamentally different philosophical approaches to

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the work. Where School of Peace/Neve Shalom/Wahat al Salaam's work is aimed at

empowering the Palestinian minority and helping the Jewish Israeli majority gain insight

into its power, Besod Siach does not subscribe to the zero sum perspective in which one

group's strength means the other's weakness. The model seeks to surface and address the

non-rational processes and often unconscious emotions that exacerbate and fuel conflict.

The aim of their work is not to resolve the disagreement over the two contradictory and

competing narratives, which are not seen as reconcilable, but rather to create a space to

hold both narratives. The assumption is that people come to Besod Siach conferences

with a strong link to their identity. Meeting the other provides clarity into one's own

identity. The aim is not change political opinions or beliefs (which is considered highly

unlikely), but to create a space where participants can understand their own and the

other's beliefs better. When space is created for these differences to co-exist, then

agreements can be made, even in the context of the contradictory narrative (personal

communication, Anat Ziff, 3/3/07). As with other models, the Besod Siach model

appears to have had limited impact on society as a whole, even though it has had a great

impact on individual participants[66]. The limited impact may be due in part to the fact that

the conferences are embedded in Israeli Jewish society and politics, with its

accompanying blind spots.

In one example from a Besod Siach conference: a settler encouraged a leftist

activist to continue to demonstrate against the occupation—"you are my conscience…I

need you to continue to do what you are doing." At the same time, the leftist recognized

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[66] This is based on unpublished interview and survey research I conducted in June 2008 with Besod Siach members and conference participants (n=15).

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that the settler was also holding some of his own paranoia and security concerns. Both

had the experience of being affirmed by the other (interview, Besod Siach conference

participant, June 2008). This vignette demonstrates important learning about the

projective process, and is an extremely important first step. However, it stops short of

allowing for change in either party's beliefs or behavior. For transformation to happen,

the projection would need to be taken back, and re-owned by the projector (Wells, 1995).

Only when the conflict is re-internalized, can the individual (or the group) actively

grapple with the *internal* conflict, and make choices with that awareness. As long as the

other holds the projection, there is no need to do anything differently.

Summary

Long-term and sustainable resolution of the Middle East conflict requires multiple

levels of intervention and dialogue that address both structural and emotional issues (S.

M. Cohen & Kelman, 2005; Wallach, 2004, 2006). Informal civic society dialogue can

serve as a complement to official political approaches. While the conflict is ongoing,

civic engagement at all levels can serve to prepare participants for peace. When the

conflict abates, working with emotions on the individual, group, and community levels

can help create an environment where conflict is less likely to recur (Fitzduff, 2006;

Fabick, 2006).

Despite the vast literature on the topic of coexistence and dialogue work between

Jews and Palestinians in Israel, there is a dearth of qualitative studies offering detailed

descriptions of the activities, intended effects, and final outcomes of interventions. Such

studies would allow researchers to see where the similarities and differences between the

models actually exist (Fisher, 2006; Tausch, et. al., 2006). In addition, similar methods

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may carry different labels, while the same label is applied to very different methods with different objectives resulting in terminological confusion. The lack of documentation and evaluation of interventions creates ongoing "confusion over what forms of intervention are being carried out at what levels of society with what intended effects" (Fisher, 2006, 64). Evidence as to successful transfer effects from interventions to policy making is primarily anecdotal. Finally, even recently published reports describe groups that were conducted prior to 2002. More up-to-date research is needed.

In the United States, the research on inter-cultural coexistence work is primarily focused on race relations. While there are numerous reports of the growing number of grassroots Jewish Palestinian or Jewish-Muslim peace initiatives, there are no empirical studies evaluating their outcomes, and few descriptive accounts of their processes and activities. Further research in this area will contribute to better understanding of the short and long term impact of these initiatives and will provide entry to further study of the dynamics of relationships between these Diaspora communities to their homelands and to each other.

The study described here aims to develop a better understanding of these dynamics and address some of the gaps in the literature. First, it examines the role of trauma and emotions in conflict on both individual and systemic levels of the conflict. Unlike other models, this approach can work with groups of eighty or more participants at a time. The project was inspired by Besod Siach's innovations in group relations methods to understanding and working with conflict. It is intended to build upon, rather than replicate their and other group relations organizations' work. The focus on the role of Diaspora communities in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is unique. The theoretical

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underpinnings of group relations, and how conflict might be understood through a group relations lens are described below. A description of conference methods is also provided.

A Group Relations Approach to Conflict

Introduction

Group relations refers to both an experiential method of learning about leadership and authority, and to a theoretical orientation. The interdisciplinary field that is now called group relations integrates psychoanalytic theory, systems theory, and political science (with its attention to power and authority). Its early influences include contributions by sociologists (Le Bon and McDougall), psychoanalysts (Freud, Klein and Bion), social scientists (Lewin) and anthropologists (Rice and Miller)[67]. The work of British psychoanalyst Wilfred Bion (1952, 1961) and his ideas about basic assumption mentality and other aspects of unconscious functioning in groups forms the foundation upon which the field is built. I have previously written about how group relations theory can be applied to understand and work with conflict in and between groups (Wallach, 2004, 2006).

Emotions in Groups

Working at the Center for Applied Social Research in London's Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, Bion explored the relationship between the individual and the group. He believed that individual members enter groups with their own rational and non-rational aims and needs, and employ psychosocial defenses[68] such as splitting[69],

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[67] For more about the history of the development of group relations as a field, see Fraher (2004b).

[68] Defense mechanisms offer a way to manage internal conflict and the anxiety it arouses. Just as countries develop various kinds of defenses and weaponry to protect themselves from perceived enemies, so, too, do individuals try to protect themselves from perceived dangers. Defense mechanisms and how they manifest on the individual and group level have been written about extensively in the psychoanalytic and group

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projection[70], and projective identification[71] in order to tolerate the powerful tensions of

group life. The group and its leader serve as a container for the various projections of

individual group members and the group takes on a life of its own as a consequence of

these processes. As a result, individual group members act not only on their own behalf,

but also on behalf of the larger group or system. These processes make up the

unconscious of the group-as-a-whole. The group-as-a-whole becomes an entity much

greater than its individual members, with a character of its own (Hayden & Molenkamp,

2004). Just as individuals utilize defense mechanisms, such as splitting and projective

identification, so do groups, organizations, communities and nations mobilize social

defenses to protect themselves against unbearable feelings, unconscious anxieties, and

conflicts (Menzies, 1975; Menzies Lyth, 1997). Groups may also avoid anxiety and other

difficult feelings and decisions by substituting routines or rituals for direct engagement

with the painful problem.

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relations literature. See, for example, (Bion, 1961; A. Freud, 1966; S. Freud, 1959a, 1959b; M. Klein, 1959; Obholzer, 1994; Obholzer & Zagier Roberts, 1994b; Ogden, 1982).

[69] *Splitting* is a defensive process in which we gain relief from internal conflicts by dividing emotions into either "all good" or "all bad" parts. We split our emotions due to our difficulty in holding two paradoxical experiences at the same time. Containing both the good and the bad parts of ourselves and seeing others as containing both good and bad aspects presents an intolerable conflict. We split in order to protect ourselves from the anxiety that the conflict arouses.

[70] *Projection* is a defense in which an individual disowns, and, then offloads onto someone else the disowned (split off) feelings s/he is experiencing. Whether the feelings are objectively 'good' or 'bad', the individual experiences them as intolerable. Projection is often seen in conjunction with splitting, with the split-off aspects of the self then projected onto another party because of the induced anxiety of holding onto the feelings oneself. Splitting and projective processes allow an internal conflict to be externalized and located outside the self (e.g., *we* are good, *they* are evil; *we* are rational, *they* are emotional; *we* are victims, *they* are perpetrators; *we* are peace loving, *they* are aggressive; *we* are heroes, *they* are cowards, etc.). Thus, the complex and ambiguous is made to seem simple and clear.

[71] *Projective identification* is a collusive process between two or more parties. In this process, once the projector has offloaded his intolerable feelings onto another, the recipient of the projection identifies with and internalizes the projected feelings as his own. The target of the projection thus changes in response to the projected feeling or impulse. The projector can manipulate or train an individual or group to act according to his projections by himself behaving *as if* those projections are true. The "projector" needs to stay in contact with the recipient in order to maintain a connection to the disowned, projected feelings (Horwitz, 1983).

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      Bion (1961)suggested that membership in any group is inherently conflictual. We long to be a part of something bigger than ourselves, while at the same time, we fear the loss of our individual identity in a group (Bion, 1961; McCollom, 1990). Conflict may signify the normal ambivalences of individual and collective life and may also signify a particular challenge that needs to be faced in the life of a group at a particular time (D. N. Berg & Smith, 1987; Heifetz, 1994).

Work Groups

      Groups tend to join together based on similarities and in order to pursue a common task. The *primary task* of any group is what it must do in order to survive. To accomplish a group's task, members must differentiate, by taking on different roles in service of the larger group task. Often, differences in skill, viewpoint, or values are also necessary to achieve a group's primary task. Boundaries are formed or created around a group and its subsystems, task, and roles to define what belongs to the group and what is to be excluded. Leadership is assigned to those most able to help a group achieve its primary task (Miller, 1989; Miller & Rice, 1975; Zagier Roberts, 1994). Bion (1961) referred to the above described overt and conscious level of group functioning as the *work group.*

      The concepts of task, role, boundary, leadership, and authority help us to understand the overt and covert dynamics of groups and systems. When these structural elements are agreed upon and in alignment with each other, groups and systems may function relatively well. Conflict can arise when there is disagreement, spoken or unspoken, or when task, role, boundaries, and authority are not in alignment. In groups, conflict may manifest between individuals in the group, between subgroups, between the

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group as a whole and an individual, or between the group as a whole and a particular

subgroup.

Basic Assumption Groups

A group that is anxious about confronting a conflict directly may unconsciously

find covert ways of containing or managing the conflict. For example, groups may use

particular members or subgroups to contain a difficult emotion, thought, or point of view

on behalf of the group as a whole. That is, an individual group member, a pair, or a sub-

group may be compelled, through the processes of projective identification, to take up a

role to meet the unconscious needs of the group. The group as a whole can maintain its

equilibrium, as long as it can view "the problem" as located in one individual or

subgroup. Groups which operate largely unconsciously, and in seeming opposition to

their stated primary task are said to be operating under *basic assumption* mentality (Banet

& Hayden, 1977; Bion, 1961; Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004; Lawrence, Bain, & Gould,

1996; Miller, 1989; Rioch, 1975). Basic assumption groups assign leadership to those

most able to help the group meet its unconscious survival needs and contain its anxiety.

Basic assumption leaders collude with the group in avoiding reality, and may be extruded

or replaced if they break this unconscious agreement.

For example, a group with conflicts around dependency issues may find an

"identified patient" in the group who it can take care of. By loading the dependency into

one person or sub-group, the group-as-a-whole frees itself of the anxiety caused by the

intolerable dependency, while at the same time maintaining the connection with those

feelings in the person of the identified patient. Elements of the dependency assumption

can be seen in the "new Israeli" of the Zionist narrative, in which all vulnerability is split

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off and attached to the "weak Diaspora Jew". Israelis are good and strong, while Diaspora

Jews are viewed with contempt for their weakness (and walking like sheep to their own

extermination). Conversely, a group with anxieties related to competence may project all

of its competence into one member or the leader and then rely on that leader to take care

of the group[72]. The example of Judith and Holophernes in Apocrypha has been cited in

the group relations literature as an example of the dangers of extreme dependency upon a

leader. Judith cut off the head of the Assyrian leader, Holophernes, and then displayed it

to his army. Without their leader, or "head," the army acted as if they had "all lost their

own heads" (Obholzer & Zagier Roberts, 1994a), and were quickly defeated by the

Israelites.

A group that struggles with its own aggression may find a member or sub-group

onto whom it may project its own aggressive tendencies (or other characteristic that

contradicts the group's perception of itself). Through the processes of splitting and

projective identification, the group locates the intolerable characteristic in one individual

and can then scapegoat that individual for owning the characteristic[73]. In this way, the

group manages its anxiety around a particular problem or conflict. By locating the

intolerable feeling or point of view, group members may divest themselves of

responsibility, and can continue to deny their own contribution to the problem. By

scapegoating a particular individual, the group maintains a connection with the split off

aspects of itself, without having to actually take ownership of those parts, or to feel the

anxiety that such ownership would involve: "The deviancy is informing the group about

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[72] Bion (1952) referred to this dynamic as basic assumption dependency.
[73] Bion (1952) referred to this dynamic as basic assumption fight/flight.

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aspects of its nature of which it would prefer to remain ignorant" (Smith and Berg, 1987, p. 91).

Scapegoating allows a group to manage its anxiety about conflict or a particular challenge it might be facing. Ultimately, it also interferes with a group's ability to effectively face that challenge or conflict, or to adapt to its environment. Real change or transformation can thus be avoided. In the Zionist narrative, Palestinians are the scapegoats: by putting all of the aggression into Palestinians and labeling them as "terrorists," Israeli Jews do not need to face their own aggression: with "the most moral army in the world," Israel acts only in self defense. Heifetz (1994) maintains that the role of the leader is to help the group face its adaptive challenges. If the group succeeds in extruding the scapegoat from the group, it is likely that the problem or conflict that the scapegoat represented will surface elsewhere in the system.

A group may also offer up a pair who gives voice to the conflict existing in the group at a particular time. That is, the group may designate two of its members to fight with each other, while the remainder of the group observes passively. Thus, rather than the group as a whole engaging in a dialogue to reflect on the conflict, it may instead be lodged in two individuals who give voice to the conflict on behalf of the larger system. Pairs of members may also be asked to hold a sense of hope for the group[74]. This may still be problematic, as the group-as-a-whole continues to avoid dealing with reality. Much was made of the handshake between Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin at the signing of the Oslo accords in 1993. There followed a period of great hope, and

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[74] Bion (1959) referred to this dynamic as basic assumption pairing. Basic assumption functioning is also discussed in Rioch (1970), Miller (1989), Lawrence, Bain, and Gould (1996), Banet and Hayden (1977); and Hayden and Molenkamp (2003).

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numerous peace and coexistence initiatives were introduced. At the same time, little

changed structurally that would allow a real peace to take place. Neither side addressed

the difficult realities or the adaptive challenges that needed to be faced within their own

constituencies, particularly the increase in Israeli settlement activity, and corruption and

internal conflict within the Palestinian Authority. Israel and Palestine may also be viewed

as a "fighting pair," in which they hold or contain the conflict on behalf of the entire

global community.

Groups can exert enormous pressure, both overt and covert, on an individual

member, pair, or subgroup to take up a particular role on behalf of the whole group.

Demographic characteristics, such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status,

and physical characteristics, may serve as the basis for which certain members are

ascribed particular roles (D. N. Berg & Smith, 1987; Horwitz, 1983; McRae & Short,

2010; Reed & Noumair, 2000). For example, women, based on cultural expectations,

may be asked to take on caretaking roles on behalf of the larger group, or to give voice to

emotions in the group. Sered's (2000) work, noted earlier, demonstrates this in her

discussion of the roles of Israeli Jewish women, and the particular ways that Israeli

patriarchal society uses them. Members of a particular ethnic group in a society may hold

certain characteristics, such as aggression or sexuality, deemed intolerable by another

ethnic group. Sometimes, these projections get translated into policy or law (Skolnick &

Green, 2006).

Basic assumption mentality, as described in the examples above, simplifies what

is complex, and allows a group to manage anxiety and internal conflict without actually

addressing the reality at hand. Groups that are invested in maintaining a particular view

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of themselves (their group identity) and of other groups can exert similar pressure on its members to behave according to group norms/expectations as a way of keeping them "in line." Speaking against predominating group norms may carry the risk of being scapegoated. Those doing so may face sanction from their own group if they violate group norms in attempting to reach out to the other. This can be seen, for example with established organizations in the American Jewish community, which label criticism of Israeli government policies as the "new anti-Semitism." Anwar Sadat and Yitzhak Rabin were assassinated by members of their own constituencies for their attempts to make peace with the other without adequately addressing the profound anxieties in their own groups (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002).

Splitting and Projective Identification in an Inter-Group Context

Groups may attempt to avoid or deny their own internal conflicts by finding an external group or enemy onto whom it can project its unacceptable, split-off parts. This is the root of stereotyping, sexism, racism and other "isms". It is also the fuel that can fan the flames of war. The less personal contact we have with other groups or individuals who represent different group identities, the more they may serve as a blank screen onto which we project our own unwanted images, ideas, desires, longings, anxieties, and prejudices. The external groups may have a valence (propensity or predisposition) for the characteristic that is being projected, and may also be compelled to take on those characteristics by virtue of the behavior of the projecting group. The more we treat a group as if they have a particular characteristic, the more we actually encourage, or even create that behavior.

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The invocation of an external enemy sets into motion a vicious cycle of projective identification, which serves to create internal unity while deflecting attention away from internal conflicts or adaptive challenges that need to be faced. As Israelis and Palestinians have less contact and younger generations have fewer opportunities to actually meet the other, dehumanization and demonization of the other increases. The cycles of projection and projective identification have boosted extremism and radicalization on both sides. In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the aggression and violence are projected onto the Palestinians, who then take up the role of "terrorists." Jewish Israelis can then remain in the more familiar and comfortable role of victim. The more the group-as-a-whole takes on the victim role and projects the aggression outward, the more likely it is (through processes of projective identification) to draw that aggression onto itself, thereby creating a self-fulfilling prophecy. This has also been referred to as inverse victimization (Roffman, 2008). This is not to dismiss actual instances of victimization and oppression of Jews throughout history. But, it is important to recognize the communal valences that continue to draw "anti-Semitism" or other forms of violence towards Jews.

The larger socio-political context—global, regional, and intra-group—further complicates the dynamics of the conflict. On the international level, the parties have been viewed as proxies in the cold war (Plitnick & Toensing, 2007). On a regional level, Arab countries have used the issue of Palestine to distract from their own internal difficulties, while it is used by Israel to divert attention from its own internal conflicts (both with Palestinian citizens of Israel, and between Jewish groups: left and right wing, secular and religious, native Israelis and new immigrants, etc. Religion (and religious fundamentalisms) is another important dimension in the larger socio-political

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environment. As the Holy Land for the three Abrahamic faiths, Israel/Palestine has long

been the repository of hopes, dreams, longings, and other projections from around the

globe. Religious beliefs and rituals (Jewish, Muslim, and Christian) have long been used

to justify violent policies and reactions on both sides[75]. A group relations lens allows one

to look at the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at multiple levels: at the psychological level of

trauma; at the social level of inter-group relations; and at the political level of

understanding the role of leadership, authority, and power. From this perspective, the

conflict is not just about two peoples, but also about what these two groups are enacting

on behalf of the global community, that is, why does the global community need these

two groups to be in conflict?

Many approaches to conflict resolution do not address the underlying anxieties

and fears that exacerbate and fuel conflict. In contrast, group relations conferences

engage participants on a deeply emotional as well as rational level; on an individual, as

well as systemic level. Learning about the processes of group projection, and increasing

awareness about how individuals participate in the projective process (that may manifest

as de-humanization of the other) can clear a path to better understanding and more

fruitful interactions within and between the groups, and may over time have an impact on

the general discourse of the conflict. Group relations conferences bring to the surface the

non-rational processes within and between groups. This is not to suggest that this

approach could or should *replace* political and structural interventions. Rather, they need

to accompany such processes.

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[75] The "Christian Zionist" movement in the United States is one example of non-Jewish and non-Arab group's involvement in and impact on the conflict, in its alignment with the Israeli right wing.

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Group Relations Conference Methods

Group relations conferences offer a unique kind of experiential learning in which participants can explore and learn about issues of power and leadership, and the conscious and unconscious processes that influence the exercise of authority in groups. Each group relations conference becomes a temporary institution, designed to reproduce many of the psychodynamic and structural characteristics of organizational and community life: task systems, structures of authority, boundaries of task, role, time and territory. The temporary organization of the conference system provides the opportunity to learn about authority, leadership and group dynamics experientially, as they unfold in the "here and now"[76]. Working within this temporary organization, members learn how it functions, how they function in it, and then examine how this experiential learning can be applied to their work settings back-home[77].

The Tavistock Institute held the first group relations conference at the University of Leicester in the U.K. in 1957, and continues to run two-week conferences there on an annual basis. Hence, conferences of this sort are often referred to as "Tavistock" conferences. The first group relations conference in the U.S. took place in 1965, and was directed by A. Kenneth Rice, after whom the U.S.-based group relations organization was named. Group relations theory and conference methods continue to be developed at the Tavistock Institute in the U.K, the A.K. Rice Institute in the U.S., and other group relations organizations around the world.

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[76] A full description of the conference experience can be found in Rice (1963), Banet and Hayden (1977); Hayden and Molenkamp (2003); and Miller (1989).
[77] Information obtained from AKRI's website www.akriceinstitute.org

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  The word "conference" can be misleading and evoke the image of traditional academic or professional meeting in which expert faculty or speakers lecture or actively facilitate sessions, while the audience passively takes in the information. In contrast, a group relations conference is structured in a way that encourages participants to assert authority by bringing in their own experience and knowledge. Both participants and staff are "participant observers" who work together to make meaning of the temporary organization/system that they are co-creating (Banet & Hayden, 1977; Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004; Miller, 1989).

  Group relations conferences may be residential or non-residential and may be as short as a weekend, or as long as two weeks. Typically, they consist of five types of events. Three of these, small study groups, large study groups and the institutional event are "here and now" events. This means that the purpose is for participants (with the assistance of one or more consultants) to study their own experience and behavior *as it occurs* in the context of the group. A small study group (SSG) will consist of eight to twelve members and one or two consultants. Traditionally, small study group assignments are made by the staff prior to the conference, in order to create groups that are heterogeneous with respect to gender, age, and race/ethnicity. The large study group (LSG) consists of all of the conference participants and three to four consultants, traditionally seated in some kind of spiral, double spiral, or concentric circle configuration where participants cannot have face-to-face contact with everyone in the room. In this kind of arrangement, crowd dynamics may be elicited and studied. In the institutional event, members choose their own groups, whose task is to study not only their own experience and behavior, but also the relations between the groups and the

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dynamics of the whole institution. Staff members may take up a variety of management

or consulting roles in these sessions (Banet & Hayden, 1977; Hayden & Molenkamp,

2004; Miller, 1989).

In addition to the "here and now" events described above, traditional group

relations conferences also have two kinds of reflective events: plenary sessions and

review and application groups (RAG—sometimes referred to as role analysis groups).

Plenary sessions include all of the members and staff and are designed to present and

discuss questions regarding the conference in general and its component parts.

Conferences generally begin and end with a plenary, as does the institutional event.

Review and application groups consist of four to eight participants to first examine the

roles they are taking and being given within the conference experience. Later on in the

conference these sessions move toward focusing on what is being learned and how it may

apply to their back-home roles and organizations (Banet & Hayden, 1977; Hayden &

Molenkamp, 2004; Miller, 1989).

The role of the staff is to encourage and support participant awareness, analysis,

reflection, and understanding of the emerging conference dynamics. Staff consultants

take an interpretive stance and attempt to offer hypotheses about conference dynamics in

the moment. They make use of their own and conference participants' observations,

thoughts, behaviors, associations, metaphors, fantasies, dreams, etc. as evidence to

support their hypotheses. Participants are free to work with these hypotheses, discard

them, or offer their own. Klein and Astrachan (1971) describe the consultant's task as

follows:

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> The consultant's task is to make learning opportunities available to the members, and he (sic) performs this task by staying in role. He does not define the activities of others, plan for the group or organize resources. He does not motivate others to attend to the group task, nor does he assess for the group how effectively it approximates its goal. He leads by attending to his task, by commenting on group dynamics, on relationships to him, on rivalries, and the like. (p.668)

Because consultants do not behave in ways consistent with what is expected in a group "leader,"[78] group members are confronted immediately with conscious and unconscious expectations and beliefs that they may hold with regard to leadership, authority, and power. The consulting stance (an admittedly unusual way of interacting with others) may provoke anxiety and/or aggression.

Conferences have a clear structure, with clear boundaries around time, task, and roles. At the same time, there is no pre-determined outcome or action agenda, as this is determined by conference participants and unfolds in the course of their work together. The assumption is that the conference serves as a microcosm of the external environment, so that by examining their behaviors and experiences within the "here and now" experience of the conference setting, participants will gain insight into the dynamics of the systems in which they work and live: at home, in the workplace and in their communities (Banet & Hayden, 1977; Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004; Miller, 1989)[79]. The dynamics that emerge within any particular group are influenced by the larger system and environment within which the group is embedded. For instance, within an organizational

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[78] In the description and implementation of a group relations conference, we are careful to refer to staff not as *leaders*, but as *consultants*.

[79] This phenomenon has also been referred to as isomorphy (Agazarian & Philibossian, 1988).

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context, the process of a particular group tends to reflect the larger organizational culture:

its assumptions, values, and beliefs. The organizational culture, in turn, is influenced by

the culture of the larger community and nation. Individuals are members of multiple

groups in addition to their work groups. By virtue of their outside identity group

memberships, group members import assumptions, values and beliefs from the larger

environment (Berg and Smith, 1987). Examining the dynamics in the microcosm of the

conference can elucidate processes in the society at large (Alford, 2004). In the United

States, group relations conferences have been used to explore various themes related to

identity, including gender, race, ethnicity, etc. (Braxton, Hayden, McRae, & Monroe,

2008; McRae & Short, 2010).

Overseas, two organizations, Besod Siach (which was the original inspiration for

the project), and Partners for Confronting Collective Atrocities[80] (an ad hoc group which

includes group relations practitioners from Europe and Israel) have conducted

conferences (in Israel and Cyprus, respectively) with themes related to the Israeli-

Palestinian conflict. One Besod Siach conference was took place in a Palestinian village

in Israel and was directed by a Palestinian citizen of Israel[81]. The International Forum for

Social Innovation (IFSI), a group relations organization based in France co-sponsored a

conference with Al-Quds University in East Jerusalem in July of 1996. While this was

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[80] Partnership for Confronting Collective Atrocities has used the model to bring together descendants of
Nazis and descendants of Holocaust survivors in Germany and Israel on a biannual basis. The last two
conferences, convened in Cyprus in 2008 and 2010, have widened the focus to include Palestinians and
"others" (Erlich, 2006).
[81] While this has not been written about in the literature, I learned about it in an interview with the
conference director in 2008. He described one incident in the conference where he had enacted a very
personal (and universal) story of displacement. This occurred during the Institutional Event, when he
realized that he had neglected to define a territory for the management team (which he headed) to work.
Unconsciously, he displaced himself, repeating in microcosm his experience of displacement as an expelled
Palestinian inside Israel (Besod Siach conference director, personal communication, 2008).

planned to take place on a regular basis, the conference was canceled by Al Quds in 1997

(Gutmann, Pierre, Ternier David, & Verrier, 1997)[82].

Group Relations Conference Research

Empirical studies of group relations conferences and their outcomes are few in

number. Early on, A. Kenneth Rice expressed resistance to doing research at conferences

due to its potential interference with the "here and now" experience of the conference. At

the same time, he suggested that such research might be more acceptable once the field

became more established (Lipgar, Bair, & Fichtner, 2004).

Group relations outcomes research has occurred primarily in a few university

settings: at Temple University, Northwestern, University of Chicago, New York

University (Silver, 2001) and more recently at the University of California in San Diego.

The research has attempted to measure various aspects of participant learning and factors

that appear to help or hinder conference learning. Such variables examined include those

related to individual member characteristics, and those that are related to characteristics

of the conference.

Conference research has been varied in both focus and method. Studies have been

aimed at understanding group process and functioning from a psychodynamic perspective

and at measuring individual member learning, including how individual and conference

characteristics impact on learning. Methods used have included systematic observation

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[82] The 1996 conference occurred after Rabin's assassination and Likud's rise into power). There were 36
participants, 28 Palestinian (1 originally European), six Israelis (three Jews and three Arab), two other
European. There were eight staff members of different nationalities, religions, and cultures: the two
Palestinians on staff held administrative roles. Consulting staff came from the US, France, India, and Israel.
The conference director was a French Jew. There was a high level of absenteeism, due to border/checkpoint
issues. The conference was characterized by many challenges to the boundaries, which were seen as a
barrier and to the non-Palestinian staff, not seen as trustworthy (Gutmann, et al., 1997).

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with or without audio and videotape recording and coding in order to understand more about psychodynamic processes in groups. Researchers have also applied ethnographic and psychometric techniques in order to study groups as social systems, and factors affecting how individuals—both members and consulting staff—are impacted by the conference experience (Lipgar, et al., 2004)

Research on individual member characteristics has looked at differences in cultural identity (Walker, 1993) or member learning styles as variables (Lipgar, Bair, & Fichtner, 2004). Conference variables studied include conference context (who sponsors the conference and number of conferences sponsored), design (including duration, number of events, and intensity—residential or non-residential), and linkages (that is the social and authority ties between staff and members of a conference). Residential conferences of greater intensity and complexity (that is longer residential conferences), with strong sponsors (that is, those who are able to successfully recruit and finance membership), and authority and social ties between members and staff were found to increase the amount of learning reported by participants (E. B. Klein & Astrachan, 1975; E. B. Klein, Correa, Howe, & Stone, 1983; E. B. Klein, Stone, Correa, Astrachan, & Kossek, 1989). Characteristics of conference consulting staff, such as their orientation toward or conceptualization of their roles (Lipgar, et al., 2004; McGarrigle, 1993), their gender and level of authority (Correa, et al., 1988; Cytrynbaum & Belkin, 2004) and the impact of those characteristics on conference dynamics and learning have also been important areas of study.

Outcomes research for group relations conferences focuses on the group process or participant learning measured during (Wheelan, et al., 1991) or immediately following

Literature Review

a conference (Lipgar, et al., 2004; Lipgar & Struhl, 1993; McGarrigle, 1993). Longer

term follow up studies (at six weeks and three months post-conference) have confirmed

that conference participants increase their learning about authority, leadership,

followership, power dynamics in groups, the group effect on task performance and

interpersonal problems in the exercise of leadership (E. B. Klein & Astrachan, 1975; E.

B. Klein, et al., 1989). There has been little follow-up on these earlier studies.

Case studies have looked at the long-term impact of group relations conference

training on organizational functioning (when a majority of employees have attended

conferences) (Menninger, 1975, 1985) and on communities in conflict (Alevy, et al.,

1974; Doob & Foltz, 1973, 1974; E. B. Klein, 1985). These studies are also not current.

Hupkens (2006) recently conducted a small pilot study consisting of intensive interviews

of five people who attended between one and six group relations conferences. More such

follow-up studies, conducted systematically, would greatly enhance our understanding of

the processes at work during and after conferences; the variables that contribute to

participant learning; the ways participants make meaning of their experiences, and how

learning accumulates over time.

Over the past five decades, group relations organizations around the world have

sponsored numerous conferences, in which many have participated. The organizations

that sponsor these events, and the consultants that staff them, are committed to offering

this kind of experiential learning. Yet, the administration of conference evaluations,

interviews, or other outcome measures, either at the conclusion of the conferences or in

later follow-up, is not part of standard practice. The coming chapters describe a pilot

study, *Authority, leadership, and peacemaking: The role of the Diasporas,* which uses

Literature Review

group relations theory and conference methods to bring together Jewish and Arab

Diaspora communities, as well as affected others, in the United States. It seeks to address

some of the gaps in the literature in regard to both group relations and conflict resolution.

The next chapter describes the specific innovations and adaptations to the group relations

model, and research methods used in this study. The remaining chapters report on

themes and dynamics in the conference and learning outcomes for participants.

Summary

This chapter has reviewed the literature in four areas of study: 1) Jewish and

Palestinian identities and collective narratives; 2) Diaspora communities; 3) conflict

resolution and dialogic interventions used with Jewish and Arab groups in Israel and in

the US and 4) group relations theory, practice, and research.

Chapter 3

METHODS

Introduction

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section discusses pre-conference planning activities, and includes information about project partners, brochure and marketing, budget, conference staff, and pre-conference data collection. The second section examines the conference itself: it includes a description of the conference task and design; participant demographics; and a discussion of reflexivity and participant observation as the method of data collection. The chapter concludes with a description of data collection in the post-conference stage, and includes a description of the survey and interview protocols.

Pre-Conference Activities

Project Partners: Roles and Responsibilities

The conference had six sponsors: three in the US, and one each in the Netherlands, Israel, and Palestine. The project partners were finalized in November 2009. I wrote up a memorandum outlining my role and responsibilities, the roles and responsibilities agreed to by each partner, and the roles and responsibilities of conference directors and staff. This memo was forwarded to each of the sponsoring organizations.

Most of the partners offered help in marketing and fundraising for the event. This included posting a link to our brochure and "fundraising widget[83]" on their websites; and announcing the conference through their electronic listserves. One organization offered to hold pre-or post-conference events to market the conference. One offered funds to pay for

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[83] through which individuals could contribute to the conference scholarship fund on line

Methods

the travel expenses of one of the co-directors. Another was to serve solely in the role of

fiscal sponsor. The conference task, roles and responsibilities of conference directors and

staff were also stated in the memorandum. The conference tasks I defined were "to

promote dialogue between the Jewish, Palestinian, and Arab Diasporas and affected

others around the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; to learn about unconscious processes and

group dynamics and how they affect the conflict; to explore identity issues in relation to

the other."

I communicated with the sponsors on a regular basis to inform them of progress

and changes regarding the project. The full text of the memorandum can be found in

Appendix G.

Conference Brochure and Marketing

The conference brochure was written over the summer and early fall of 2009. The

full text for it can be found in Appendix H. The design and writing the brochure is

typically the director's task. Because of the nature of the project, I took a larger role in

this than is usual in conference work. The two directors and I each worked on parts of the

brochure, although I had general oversight and did the final editing. The brochure stated

that the primary task of the conference would be:

> … **to learn – through experience – how groups function, how we exercise
> leadership in groups, and how we can become more effective leaders** within
> the organizations and communities in which we live and work. Uniquely, we will
> have the opportunity to focus on those elements of leadership that can often be
> obscured from view – the hidden challenges.

This was somewhat different than the way I had originally defined the task for the

directors, and was worded along the lines of a traditional group relations conference, with

the emphasis on the exercise of leadership in groups (Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004;

Methods

Miller, 1989). However, I approved the text because I thought the rest of the brochure

made clear that the focus would be on examining the dynamics of Jewish and Middle

Eastern Diaspora communities in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and to

explore possibilities for peacemaking. The brochure went online in November 2009. I

developed a database of approximately 600 organizations, groups, and individuals: these

included academic departments and institutions; activist groups; Arab American and

Jewish American organizations (mainstream and activist); religious congregations

(Muslim, Jewish, and Christian); mental health organizations and professional groups;

and organizations and departments concerned with conflict resolution in general and the

Palestinian-Israeli conflict in particular. E-mail flyers were sent out to this list three to

four times between January and April 2010.

Budgeting

In the budget prepared by one of the conference directors and me, all conference

costs (staff honoraria; travel; room and lodging expenses; advertising; and participant

room and board) would be covered by tuition costs for participants. Fees were set at

$1695.00 (including tuition, room, and board) for a four day residential conference. In

February 2010 (about two months before the conference was to begin), the directors and I

decided to shorten the conference by one day, and make residency optional. This would

substantially decrease the cost (fees were now $395.00, including tuition and food, with

lodging extra) and was aimed to encourage enrollment. The conference was funded

through small grants from Lesley University, the Northeast Society for Group

Psychotherapy Foundation and Group Relations International; individual online

donations made through a fundraising widget; tuition monies; and the researcher.

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Conference Staff and Staff Work

I hired two conference directors in April of 2009: a Christian Palestinian man living in Israel, and a Jewish American man living in the US. The role of the directors was to direct a conference within the parameters that I had defined, in regard to the conference theme, primary task, conference title and the research portion of the conference. The directors agreed to convene a conference with as many as 50 participants, and as few as eleven[84].

Other elements of the directors' roles included developing the conference design, preparing a conference budget, designing the conference brochure with a graphic designer that I had chosen, and hiring staff. The conference directors and I scheduled monthly meetings via Skype, and met more frequently as the dates of the conference drew near.

The directors hired staff consultants whose cultural identities would reflect the different groups who would be attending the conference: Arab, Middle Eastern, Jewish, and "other." The consulting staff included: one Asian American, one Persian American, one Palestinian American, one Jewish American, one Arab Jew living in Israel, and one Christian Arab living in Europe[85]. An African American was hired to be conference administrator. In total, the conference staff had five women and four men.

For all of the conference staff (except for the Palestinian co-director who had consulted at Besod Siach conferences), this application of group relations methods was

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[84] The number eleven was chosen, because that was the smallest group relations conference that I had knowledge of to date. Not coincidentally, it had been directed by the Jewish American co-director, and I had served on staff.

[85] The Arab consultant from Europe had to withdraw from role two weeks before the conference, for medical reasons.

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completely new. All were interested in discovering what might be learned from this

particular adaptation of the group relations model, and in seeing what further innovations

might be developed. The directors in particular wanted to involve the consulting staff in

designing the conference. The staff met three times via conference call from December

2009 to March 2010. The purpose of these calls was 1) to get to know each other and

discuss their connectedness to the conference task (often called "joining work") 2)

discuss conference design and 3) discuss conference recruitment. They convened on the

conference site two nights before the conference was to begin.

About two months before the conference, the administrator had to withdraw for

medical reasons. When it became clear that enrollment would not be sufficient to support

all of the consultants, all of the staff expressed willingness to shift into member roles, if

that became necessary[86]. This shift was finalized in the work done between the

conference directors and staff the day before the conference was to begin. The directors

decided (and I concurred) to use the time already set aside for staff work as a transition

day[87]. The consulting staff did joining work in the morning, and discussed conference

design ideas in the afternoon. After this, they shifted into their member roles. In essence,

we were adding a "pre-conference" for the part of the group that had been hired to be on

staff.

In the conference itself, we would now have a two tiered system of

membership—a subgroup of members who were more privileged, and another set of

members who were paying to attend (though they too were being subsidized to some

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[86] Their travel and lodging expenses would still be covered by me.
[87] A number of staff were coming from out of state or out of the country, and could not change tickets
without an additional fee.

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degree). We believed that if this difference were made transparent, and explored, then it

would provide additional opportunities for learning about a conflict in which the two

sides are unequal in terms of power and privilege.

Pre-Conference Data Collection

Pre-conference, I recorded notes during or just after all of my meetings with

directors and during staff meetings, and saved all correspondence pertaining to the

conference. The directors convened staff meetings, and I contributed to them when I

thought it appropriate. In addition to participant observation in pre-conference staff

meetings, I administered pre-conference surveys to the staff and people who had signed

up for the conference (see appendix I). The purpose of the pre-conference survey was to

elicit information about the participants' learning goals, hopes, concerns and expectations

for the conference, prior involvement in dialogue or coexistence work with the other

community; as well as previous encounters with experiential learning. Questions

regarding demographic background and how participants defined their religion and

ethnicity were also asked. Finally I asked respondents to define their political views vis-

à-vis the conflict, in order to have a baseline to compare with post-conference responses.

In addition to collecting data from conference participants, I also recorded my

observations at various meetings or lectures I attended in regard to the conflict, and my

own internal emotional experience while planning the conference.

The Conference

Conference Task

Authority, Leadership, and Peacemaking was different from a typical group

relations conference in a number of ways. Some of the changes to traditional ways of

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mounting conferences were deliberate and others were the result of environmental

exigencies, and might better be labeled as adaptations. Deliberate innovations concerned

the conference task and conference design, and the way in which the research was

integrated into the conference. All of the innovations and adaptations had repercussions

for conference dynamics, which will be discussed at greater length in the next chapter.

A major difference from the traditional conference model was the introduction of

a second task: to bring together Jewish, Arab, and other Middle Eastern Diaspora

communities to explore their role in contributing to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and

how they might contribute the peacemaking process. The "double task" model was

introduced by Harold Bridger, one of the founders of the Tavistock Institute, who later

founded the Bayswater Institute in the UK. This model puts equal emphasis on the

unconscious process and the work task (L. Klein, 2005). With Bridger's departure, the

Tavistock and Bayswater models developed independently of each other. Group relations

organizations in the US are more closely allied with the Tavistock model. For this project

the group relations conference model would be the tool or method for dialogue (rather

than an end in itself), with a greater emphasis on the theme of the role of the Diasporas in

the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Conference Design

The conference structure ultimately resembled that of a traditional group relations

conference, with traditional types of events, described in the literature review and below

(Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004). The final conference design included opening and

closing plenaries, study groups, an institutional event, review and application groups and

a conference discussion, held at the end of the second day and meant to serve as a kind of

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review session for all conference members. The conference events are described below,

and a full schedule may be found in Appendix J.

The conference opening and closing sessions bookmarked the conference. Their

task was to "provide an opportunity for members and staff to express their thoughts and

feelings on crossing the boundaries from the outside environment into the conference and

from within the conference to the outside environment"[88]. During these sessions, the

entire conference sat in the designated "plenary room." The two directors sat in front

facing all of the conference members, whose chairs were arranged in a straight line. I sat

on the same side of the room as the directors, though several feet off to the side and a few

steps behind. During the conference opening, the directors read an opening statement (see

appendix K for full text) explaining the primary task of the conference, describing their

roles, and talking about the conference theme, and the concepts of leadership and

authority. During this time, I was also asked to say something about the research. I spoke

very briefly, directing members to their conference folders, which contained the

disclosure form (see appendix L). During the closing plenary, I shared some of my

observations, as well as some of my experiences in the pre-conference planning, when I

felt it would elucidate some of the dynamics being discussed.

Study Groups (SG) met five times during the conference[89]: twice on the first and

second days, and once on the last day. Their purpose was "to study processes as they

occur – in the "here-and-now"—in this face-to-face group with special reference to the

---

[88] The phrasing of the tasks for these events is from the conference directors, as written in the conference packet.

[89] There was some discussion about this during the pre-conference staff work. Staff considered having both a large and a small study group, or eliminating one of them. Given the size of the membership, it made sense to not differentiate between different types of study groups.

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exercise of authority and the emergence of leadership." This group met across the hall

from the plenary room. Twelve chairs were set up in a circle to accommodate all

conference members and the two directors. As the researcher, I sat outside the circle at

the back of the room.

There were six sessions plus a closing plenary for the Institutional Event (IE),

which took place during the second and third (last) day of the conference. In this event,

members were given the opportunity to form their own sub-systems, and negotiate their

mission in relation to the institution. The primary task was "to explore the relationship

between the sub-systems and the conference-as-a-whole in the 'here-and-now.'" The

management (i.e., the conference directors) met in a separate room on the second floor.

They did their work in public and members were free to observe or meet with them (with

the authorization of their respective groups). The text for the event opening (read by the

directors) can be found in Appendix M. The institutional event added the element of

inviting members to co-design the final institutional event plenary in consultation with

the directors. Members were informed of this opportunity in the fourth session of the

event. This innovation has been used increasingly in group relations conferences. During

the event, I observed the group formation process, and then split my time between the

two member groups and the management group[90]. One of the member groups refused to

allow me to observe during one of the last institutional event sessions, while they were

planning for the final plenary. Otherwise, both groups agreed to my requests to observe.

There were two Review and Application Group (RAG) sessions, whose task was

"to provide members the opportunity to examine and discuss unresolved conference

---

[90] In this session, the three groups met simultaneously.

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issues, reflect upon experiences and learning during the various conference events, and

consider application of conference learning to home institutions." There were four or

five members in each RAG group, which met with one of the conference directors. The

groups met in smaller rooms or sections of the plenary and study group rooms. Seating

arrangements in these groups were less formal, but more or less in a circular

configuration. Since there were two different RAG groups, I split my time between them,

observing one the first night, and the other on the last day. I sat just outside the circle.

The Conference Discussion (CD) took place at the end of the second day. Its task

was "to provide the opportunity for all conference participants to reflect on conference

issues, experiences and learning during the various conference events." The event

included all conference members. Here the seating arrangement was somewhat similar to

the opening and closing plenaries, though reversed: the directors and members were now

sitting on opposite sides of the room from where they were in the opening[91].

Participant Demographics[92]

There were a total of twelve participants in the conference. The directorate

included myself (a Jewish female), and the two male conference directors (one Jewish

American and one Christian Palestinian). There were an additional five women and four

male participants. Of these, four were Jewish (three of Eastern European origin, one of

Arab background), two were Muslim (one Persian American and one Palestinian

American) and three were from Catholic backgrounds (two from Western European

origin, and one from Asian origin). All but two people (one Muslim, one Jewish)

---

[91] The purpose of this was to differentiate the two events.

[92] To clarify the terminology: I use the word participants to include all who took part in the conference: directors, members, and me. "Members" refers to those participants in the conference who did not serve in a staff role, including those who began as staff, and later shifted into a membership role.

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described their religious practices as secular or eclectic. Table 1 below illustrates the

demographics of conference participants and staff according to gender and religious

background.

Table 1: Participant Demographics (Conference Members and Directors)

	Religious Background	Gender	
		Male	Female
Conference Directors	Jewish	1	
	Christian	1	
Conference Creator	Jewish		1
Conference Members	Jewish	2	2
	Christian	1	2
	Muslim	1	1
	Total	**6**	**6**

Conference Data Collection: Reflexivity, Subjectivity, and Participant Observation

While qualitative researchers have divergent opinions about the importance of

"objectivity" (B. L. Berg, 2007; Creswell, 1998; Glesne, 2006; Reinharz, 1992), psycho-

social researchers (Clarke, 2002; Clarke & Hoggett, 2009; Hollway & Jefferson, 2000)

take for granted the subjectivity of the researcher.

> psycho-social research enhances the ethical dimension of knowledge production
>
> by revealing the projective dynamics of the researcher-researched relationship and
>
> utilizing it for the purpose of deeper understanding (Alexandrov, 2009, p. 38).

Psycho –social research (Clarke, 2002; Clarke & Hoggett, 2009; Hollway &

Jefferson, 2000) involves looking beneath the surface of what subjects say in order to

ascertain additional meaning. The method assumes unconscious processes are present

within and between both the researcher and the researched. Psycho-social research

emphasizes reflexivity, recognizing the emotional involvement (conscious and

unconscious) of the researcher in the project. Such reflexivity can aid in the

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understanding of transference and counter-transference dynamics in the research. An

awareness of the practitioner's own values, prejudices and identifications can help the

researcher delineate whether what is evoked belongs to the subject, is co-constructed, or

belongs to the researcher (Clarke, 2002; Clarke & Hoggett, 2009; Hollway & Jefferson,

2000). For that reason, I included a discussion of aspects of my own narrative relevant to

the conference in the introduction of this dissertation, and present my affective

experience of events before and during the conference as part of the data collected.

In group relations conferences, members and staff are "participant observers" who

try to make meaning of what they are experiencing together. Their observations,

thoughts, fantasies, and emotions are all considered data to be used in the pursuit of the

understanding of the conference process (Banet & Hayden, 1977; Hayden & Molenkamp,

2004; Miller, 1989; Wells, 1995). The conference setting is understood to be a

microcosm of the larger environment within which the conference is taking place.

Meaning is negotiated in the conference setting, as both staff and members offer

hypotheses about the meaning of conference events. Thus, attention is paid to what

happens within the conference setting, and to how participants think and feel about those

events, as a means of understanding the larger system. Thus, in this chapter and those that

follow, my experiences, observations and emotions are presented as additional data to aid

in the understanding of conference processes and dynamics.

Roles of the Researcher

Conference directors and staff were aware that research would be embedded into

this conference, and were aware that I would observe conference events and staff

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meetings. At the conference, and throughout all events, I sat outside of the group with my

laptop, and transcribed verbatim, as much as I was able, all that was said.

The conference directors and I negotiated that I would be a "researcher with

voice." This meant that I would be able to take up my authority to speak if I felt it

important to do so[93]. The title of "researcher with voice" carried enough ambiguity to be

both useful and problematic. In general, we agreed that I would not speak during the

Study Group sessions, which were here and now events. The "there and then" events:

plenary sessions, review and application groups and conference discussion, had reflective

tasks, which allowed me to speak from my researcher role, sharing my observations and

reflections, when I felt it would elucidate some of the dynamics being discussed. As

noted earlier, this way of working is grounded in group relations theory and practice

(Wells, 1995).

Formal conference events ended at 8:30 PM on Friday and 9 PM on Saturday,

after which members were free to do as they wished. Since only three of the members

commuted, most would remain at the conference site socializing until late in the evening.

While the directors were constrained by the boundaries of their roles in terms of

interacting with members, I was more or less free to move between the member and staff

groups. The directors often worked into the evenings, reviewing the day and preparing

for the next. I sat in and took notes during these work meetings, and contributed ideas

when asked, and/or when I felt it was important. On Thursday and Friday, these meetings

---

[93] Various models of incorporating research and observer roles have been tried in group relations conferences. One model is for the researcher to be on the staff, but completely silent, moving in and out of various conference events at will. Another model has the researcher/observer be mostly silent, but asked to speak and share observations at specified times. On occasion, the observer takes on the role of "consultant to the system" of the conference, with a voice in management.

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went on until late. On Saturday evening, after the directors finished working, I spent time

with the members in the plenary room (with their permission) as they talked, laughed,

drank wine, and danced. During meal times I ate primarily with the directors, but once or

twice with the conference members. I did not take notes during the informal parts of the

conference. While my observations during formal conference events were deliberate and

planned, the decision to join informal events was spontaneous. I did not take notes at

these times, and participated on a social level.

     In addition to being the conference researcher, I had several other conference

roles: conference creator, sponsor, project director, and pre-conference administrator.

These roles were made public on the conference website, and were openly discussed in

conference sessions. Juggling the multiple roles was complex for all. My responsibilities

included: negotiating partnerships, hiring the conference directors, fundraising, and

providing oversight and final approval for the budget and conference brochure.

As the conference creator who had been developing the project (over a period of seven

years, from conception to implementation), I had a strong stake in the process and

conference outcomes. My interest in both the theme and the methods is not purely

academic. I am interested in facilitating change in the discourse (and ultimately actions)

of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict on individual, group, and larger communal and societal

levels. I brought all of these personal, professional, and political views and biases with

me to the development and implementation of this conference. All of these affected what

I perceived and how I interpreted what I was seeing before, during, and after the

conference. I influenced and was influenced by the dynamics of the institution we were

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co-creating, as well as my own understanding and judgments about how group relations

conferences should work.

Post-Conference Data Collection

       Following the conference, data was collected from surveys and in-depth

interviews. In order to try to gain a better understanding of the larger context, I also

interviewed two Palestinians who have been involved in Israel-Palestine education and

activist work. My aim was to better understand the meaning of the low number of

conference registrations, within the larger context of Arab-Jewish inter-group dialogue in

the United States.

Surveys

       Two surveys were administered post conference: an end-of-conference

evaluation, and a three month follow-up survey. Survey protocols were largely adapted

from the work of Patton (2002) and aimed to gather quantitative and qualitative

information about what participants learned. All surveys were administered via Survey

Monkey, a web-based survey organization. Participants were notified via email about the

surveys, and were given one week to complete them. The deadline was extended to

increase the response rate, and reminder notices were sent out. All nine conference

members completed the end-of-conference evaluation. Eight completed the three-month

follow-up survey. The evaluation and follow-up survey may be found in Appendices N

and O respectively.

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Immediate Post-Conference Evaluation Survey

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. The post-conference evaluation consisted of 22 Likert scale questions and eleven open-ended questions. Likert scale questions included questions about:

- Goals and expectations: to what extent was the conference what you expected it to be?

- Participant learning about group dynamics: to what extent did you learn about the ways leadership and authority emerges and is taken up in groups?

- Participant learning about the Israeli Palestinian conflict: how much have you learned about the Israeli narrative of the Israeli Palestinian conflict? How much have you learned about the Palestinian narrative?

- The degree to which participants' expectations and goals were met: To what extent have you achieved your goals during the conference?

- The contributions of particular conference events to participant learning: to what extent did each of the following events (study groups, institutional event, review and application groups) contribute to your learning?

- Participants' views of conference staff effectiveness in assisting their learning: How effective were the directors in terms of 1) illuminating the dynamics of the various groups they participated in? 2) illuminating the dynamics of conflict? 3) illuminating the dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? 4) helping participants to understand their identity group's role in the conflict

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- The impact of the conference on participants' personal, professional, and community lives: To what extent has participation in this conference affected you personally? To what extent do you think participation in this conference will affect your professional life? To what extent do you think participation in this conference will affect your activities with your own identity group? With the other identity group?

- The extent to which the conference was worthwhile and the likelihood of recommending the conference to others.

Surveys also included open-ended questions intended to gather data that better reflected dynamic complexities of the conference and participant learning. For example, participants were asked to describe the most meaningful part of the conference for them, the most important lesson they were taking from the conference, and what they would say if someone asked them to describe the conference experience. Respondents were also free to add comments to the Likert scale questions, and most did.

Three-Month Follow-Up Survey

Because the learning that participants take from group relations conferences is not always immediately evident, follow-up surveys were also administered three months following the conference[94]. The follow-up survey consisted of eight Likert scale questions and one open ended question. As with the evaluation, respondents were also free to comment upon their answers to the former. Several of the Likert questions were repeats of those asked in the conference evaluation, in order to measure whether participants learned more in the months following the conference. These included

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[94] Follow-up will continue at the six and twelve month marks as well. Those findings will be documented in a later report.

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questions such as: to what extent has participation in the conference affected you

personally; and to what extent has participation in the conference affected you

professionally. Participants were also asked to rate their learning in the following areas:

- How I take up authority and leadership

- Understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

- Covert or unconscious processes in groups

- Covert or unconscious processes in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

- Identity issues

- Understanding of the role of the Diasporas in the Israeli-Palestinian

  conflict

- Other

These questions had been modified based on responses to the conference evaluation and

first interviews to address shortcomings with the original evaluation: I had neglected to

ask participants to rate their learning in the above areas in the evaluation, but had instead

asked them to rate the effectiveness of the directors in illuminating the dynamics related

to particular areas of learning.

Interviews

The interviews were aimed at understanding how participants and staff

experienced and made meaning of the conference, what impact the conference had on

them, and how this may have changed over time. I also examined the processes at work

during and after the conference that facilitated or hindered learning. Participants were

interviewed twice: once immediately or shortly after the conference, and again three

months later. I audio-taped and transcribed all interviews. They were asked to sign a

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consent letter prior to the first interview. Interview protocols were adapted from designs

proposed by Patton (2002) and Seidman (1998). The consent letter can be found in

Appendix P, post-conference interview protocols for members in Appendix Q, for

directors in Appendix R and thee month follow up interviews in Appendix S.

Immediate Post-Conference Interview

Participants were emailed immediately after the conference to schedule a time for

an interview. I followed up one or more times with participants who did not immediately

respond. The first interviews took place between April 24 and May 18, 2010. Since the

majority of participants lived out of state or overseas, most interviews took place over the

phone or through Skype. Because of technical problems with Skype, the interviews with

the two participants who lived in Israel took place over two sessions. Three interviews

were face to face. I was able to interview all nine conference members and both

conference directors following the conference.

The first post-conference interviews were between one and one and a half hours

in length. The interview protocol differed slightly for conference members and directors.

The former consisted of sixteen open-ended questions while the latter consisted of twelve

open-ended questions. Questions addressed to both members and directors asked about

expectations/goals they had for the conference and the extent to which the conference

met those expectations; what had they been concerned about before the conference, and

which of those things occurred; what was the most meaningful part of the experience;

what did they wish they had done differently; and whether there was anything that I

hadn't asked about that I should have asked, or anything I should know. Some questions

were somewhat repetitive, though phrased slightly differently, and meant to delve deeper

Methods

into participants' experiences. These questions included how the conference affected

participants personally and professionally; what they got out of the experience; and what

was the most important lesson they were taking from the experience. Members were

asked questions about the impact on them of the shift from staff to member roles; their

experience in the IE, and why they chose to be in the group they did; the impact of the

conference on their relatedness to their identity or to other identities; and what they

would say if they were asked by a community group whether they should sponsor a

conference like this.

Three-Month Follow-Up Interviews

The second round of interviews was conducted in July of 2010. For the sake of

simplicity, the director and member interviews were the same. I also streamlined the

protocol to seven questions, four of which also contained follow-up/probing questions.

Both directors and eight of the conference participants were interviewed at this time.

Second interviews ranged from 20 to 90 minutes in length. Participants were first asked

to describe anything that stood out for them about the conference (highlights or low

points). Like the first interview, they were then asked to speak about how the conference

affected them: personally, professionally, in terms of their community involvement; and

in terms of their understanding about or activities related to the Israeli-Palestinian

conflict. Participants were asked whether there were other ways that the conference

affected them and what experiences at the conference have carried over to their life since

the conference.

Methods

Interviews with Palestinian Activists

After the conference (in May and June respectively), I interviewed two Palestinian activists. The purpose of these interviews was to gain a better understanding of the larger context and reasons for low conference turn-out. Interviews were very open-ended and conversational. The core questions were: what has been your experience in organizing or participating in Jewish-Arab inter-group work in the US? What have been the challenges? What have you done to address those challenges?

All interviews were audio-taped. Participants were informed that they could go off the record at any time. One participant did so at the end of the first interview. I typed participants' responses into my computer during the interviews. After each interview I transcribed all of the tapes. This took an additional one to three hours per interview.

Summary

This chapter documented the planning, implementation, and data collection activities engaged in by the researcher, project partners, conference directors and staff before, during, and after the conference. This chapter also described the psycho-social research approach taken, which emphasizes reflexivity and the dynamic interaction between researcher and researched. Chapters Four and Five report the research findings. The details and the dynamics of the conference planning process are described in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

PRE-CONFERENCE AND CONFERENCE DYNAMICS

Introduction

The next two chapters report on findings from pre-conference and conference observation, surveys, and interviews. The first chapter (Pre-Conference and Conference Dynamics) provides a narrative account of processes and events before and during the conference, describes pre-conference and conference dynamics, and explores conference themes. It includes (1) a description of the approach taken here to data analysis (2) an account of the pre-conference planning process; (3) a discussion of conflict, anxiety, and parallel process; and (4) the salient themes and dynamics that arose within the conference. I describe the themes in narrative form, and bring in post-conference reflections of participants to triangulate that data. The second chapter (Participant Learning) reports on participant learning using data collected from interviews and surveys.

Data Analysis

Data collected from pre-conference and conference observation were analyzed as a whole for thematic content, using processes described by Patton (2002). I read through the transcripts of the conference observation several times. First, I looked at them as a whole to look for general themes, which I tentatively labeled: 1) the complexity of identity; 2) Diaspora vs. exile; 3) disengagement vs. dialogue; 4) conflict/differentiation vs. avoidance/disengagement; 5) peace vs. conflict; 6) truth vs. lies; 7) trinity/triumvirate vs. twinning; 8) gendered roles and the role of gender; 9) conference theme vs. conference process; 10) researcher vs. conference creator. Most of these themes had been

Pre-Conference and Conference Dynamics

explicitly discussed during the conference and in post-conference interviews by the

directors and the members. I then reviewed each of the transcripts with the above themes

in mind and coded them. I merged the two themes dealing with disengagement vs.

dialogue and conflict/differentiation vs. avoidance/disengagement. I triangulated this data

with data collected from the surveys and interviews. Relevant quotes from post

conference interviews where participants reflected on conference themes are included

here.

Analysis was both inductive and deductive. I looked for themes that emerged

from the data of the conference. At the same time, group relations theory provided the

theoretical lens (of the directors and most participants, as well as the researcher) through

which conference events were interpreted. The unit of analysis in a group relations

conference is the group as a whole: thus, the emphasis is on what an individual or sub-

group may hold on behalf of the entire group through processes of projection and

projective identification (Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004; Wells, 1995). The method

assumes unconscious processes are present within and between both researcher and

subject. As a researcher, I benefited from the fact that all but two of my subjects had vast

experience working in group relations, and were quite familiar with the interpretive frame

being used. Throughout the conference, staff and members worked to make sense of

conference dynamics and their own contribution to them. They brought a similar

reflexivity to their interviews.

Pre-Conference and Conference Dynamics

Pre-Conference Dynamics

In the early planning phase, I met with many people in both Jewish and Palestinian American communities in order to ascertain interest in the project and explored co-sponsorship opportunities with several individuals at organizations in the Boston area. These organizations included academic departments, co-existence groups and organizations aligned with either the Jewish or Arab American communities. My initial plan was to have several sponsoring organizations (in addition to the group relations organizations on board) to support the project with recruitment and funding: Arab, Jewish, and academic. The majority of people with whom I spoke were enthusiastic about the project. However, finding organizational sponsors and securing the funds for the conference were much more complex than anticipated.

Early on in this process, I inadvertently walked in to a political conflict involving two of the individuals/organizations that I had approached. In one exchange, the leadership at an established American Jewish organization asked me for information about other organizations with which I was discussing co-sponsorship. At the mention of one organization, the person balked, claiming that the person in charge of the organization I had named was "anti-Semitic."[95] In a follow-up letter they wrote:

> "…we could not possibly engage in dialogue with groups or individuals that promote the demonization or de-legitimization of Israel or Zionism (as opposed to legitimate criticism). If one party cannot acknowledge the basic right of the other party to self-determination, such a position is a non-starter for community relations work in general and dialogue in particular."

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[95] I am not clear whether or not the two ever met.

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This statement reflects a dynamic within established Jewish organizations in the US, whereby criticism of Israeli policy is labeled as anti-Semitic (described in chapter 2)[96]. I realized at this point that co-sponsorship with any partisan organizations would be a minefield for a project that addressed an already a politically loaded issue. I would continue to reach out to both Jewish and Arab American organizations, but decided that my project could not be officially linked to them.[97]

Boundaries around the conference were constantly shifting. There were two postponements, three sets of directors, and several different configurations of sponsoring organizations, which did not become finalized until about six months prior to the scheduled dates of the conference[98].

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[96] I received only two other negative responses to the conference. Two people, one Jewish and one Palestinian both reacted very negatively to the same paragraph in the conference brochure, referring to the "cycle of violence" in the Middle East. One wrote:
 "Looks interesting. However, I find the phrase "ongoing cycle of violence" offensive. It implies an even handedness that is not there. Israel has been consistently asking for peace and educating their children that peace is the goal. The Palestinians and surrounding Arab States have been advocating the destruction of Israel since its inception and train their children to die as martyrs and hate the Jews. There should be peace, and there is room for compromise, but you have to have two sides willing to negotiate in good faith."
The next one wrote:
"The first sentence in your flyer makes me turn my back in dismay."Cycle of Violence"??? Aren't we, those **truly** working to bring peace, equality freedom and justice to that piece of land for all living there, beyond that rhetoric by now? With the burning of the children of Gaza and the continued colonization of the West Bank in day light, in defiance of the whole world, arrest of children on a daily basis, harassment of human rights non violent actors in the West Bank, the ethnic cleansing of Jerusalem, Hebron, the Apartheid Wall, house demolitions, razing and theft of land ...??? Need I say more? I refuse to work with any group that does not acknowledge the reality of what we are dealing with. We are a people who have been colonized, occupied and are living under what has been described as "worse than apartheid" by many simply for the fact that we are dispensable, to be gotten rid of, ethnically cleansed!
And you start your flyer with "The Cycle of Violence"???"
The wording of the flier was problematic in other ways, and this will be discussed further in the final chapter.
[97] In fact, project partners included both a Jewish/Israeli and a Palestinian organization. Both organizations were based in Israel/Palestine. With the BDS (boycott, divestment and sanctions) movement gaining steam, this may have had some impact on conference recruitment.
[98] The original organizational sponsor withdrew from the project after some miscommunication and/or misunderstanding about our respective roles and authorization. The board wanted oversight and final approval of conference directors and staff, the brochure, and the budget, which I found to be not entirely reasonable since all legal and financial liability for the project rested with me. They re-joined the project several months before the conference, after the new directors were hired.

Pre-Conference and Conference Dynamics

Staffing the conference was marked by misfortune, conflict, and tragedy. An Israeli member of Besod Siach was hired early on as co-director of the conference, and was able to recruit a very experienced Palestinian co-director. Unfortunately, the Palestinian co-director died in 2007, after a long illness. Another Palestinian director was hired in December of 2008. After a few conversations, it became clear that we had very different visions for the project and how it should be managed. Both directors were uncomfortable with a single individual serving as the primary sponsor, fearing it would put too much power in the hands of one person. By March of 2009, both the Israeli and Palestinian co-directors had withdrawn from their roles. I posit that my conflict with these directors mirrored, in microcosm, a dynamic aspect of the conflict: with a Jewish American perceived as exerting too much power over the Israeli and Palestinian partners. Various dynamics of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict continued to play out throughout the planning process and into the conference itself.

With the conference eight months away, time was short. After conversations with several potential directors and a postponement of the event, I hired both a Jewish and Palestinian director. Both of these directors were relatively or completely new to directing, and were open to taking an innovative approach to group relations conference work. Both directors were already acquainted with each other, and eager to work together. Interestingly, both of them were men, while the original co-directors were both women. The conference was postponed one more time (to April, 2010) to allow for time to recruit staff.

The registration process for this conference was particularly turbulent. The directors had previously agreed to direct a conference with as few as ten or twelve

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participants, and as many as fifty[99]. We had a few dozen serious inquiries about the

conference, and several people applied. With only five applications in hand the week

before the conference was to begin, one of the directors suggested that we postpone the

conference yet again. We decided to proceed. In the final week before the conference,

four members dropped out (one who had just registered), and three subsequently joined,

the last one just one hour before the conference. Only one of the original five applicants

actually attended the conference. While it is not uncommon to have one or two last

minute cancellations, this level of turnover is highly unusual, and mirrors the larger

dynamic of disengagement that has characterized Israeli-Palestinian relations over the last

several years.

In the months prior to the conference conditions in Israel-Palestine continued to

deteriorate: the Israeli government had accelerated its crack down on Palestinian and

Israeli human rights groups, as regular non-violent demonstrations against home

demolitions and other anti-occupation activities increased[100]. In Europe and the US, the

BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) movement (against Israel) was gaining

momentum. The Goldstone report (stating that Israel, as well as Hamas had engaged in

war crimes during the Israeli invasion of Gaza in 2008) was approved by the United

Nations in October 2009 (Clifton, 2010). The Report faced a good deal of opposition both

in Israel and from established Jewish organizations in the US. In March 2010, fissures in

the US Israeli relationship were in the headlines. During Vice President Joe Biden's trip

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[99] Typically (and preferably), conferences can accommodate 20 to 90 participants and are often canceled with fewer than 20 participants. I once served on staff of a conference with a membership of 11. This tends to be the exception, rather than the rule. Conferences require a lot of meeting space and staff, and so can be an expensive undertaking.
[100] On the other hand, the crackdown also signified the increasing success of non-violent, anti-occupation activities.

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to Israel the Israeli interior minister announced that Israel would continue building in occupied East Jerusalem. This was labeled by the media and the diplomatic community as "a slap in the face" to the US. Special envoy George Mitchell was to mediate indirect talks between the Palestinians and the Israelis: a big step backward after many years of face-to-face talks between the two sides. Anxiety about the potential explosiveness and despair about the current situation may also have played a role in the ambivalence of conference sponsors to commit to the project, and for potential participants to apply.

Conflict, Anxiety and Parallel Process

My relationship with the two male co-directors was rife with conflict. In contrast, their exchanges with each other were filled with warmth (calling each other "buddy," or signing their emails "hugs"), and were seemingly devoid of conflict. The conflict was expressed in ways that felt particularly gendered. I often felt shut out: the image in my mind was of standing outside of a boys' clubhouse, plastered with a big sign reading "no girls allowed." There were a number of behaviors such as non-responsiveness to my emails, not showing up to meetings, or cancelling at the last minute that I experienced not just as a challenge to my authority, but also as a show of disrespect.

I was more forgiving of the Palestinian director due to the numerous very real medical and technological issues he was facing (swine flu, technological problems as a result of computer hacking, and other family medical issues), and his regular reiteration of his commitment to the project. When I challenged the Jewish director about his commitment[101], he often became exasperated with me. Once, he told me that my questioning "feels like nagging." Another time he stated, "I don't know what it would

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[101] who was, he later acknowledged, ambivalent about the project for a number of reasons

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take to convince you," suggesting that I was the one with a problem. Group relations

literature speaks to the dilemmas faced by women in authority roles. Women may be

expected to behave in certain ways, as unconscious stereotypes collide with unconscious

expectations of leadership. They may be viewed as either too aggressive or too wishy-

washy (Kram & McCollom Hampton, 1998). I felt drawn into the role of a stereotypical

intrusive, demanding and hyper-critical Jewish mother to a misbehaving son. We did not

talk about or work through the conflict at all prior to the conference[102]. We had brief

skirmishes, followed by tense moments and periods of working together very

productively.

When the conflict between the Jewish director and me threatened to explode, the

Palestinian director would intervene with an interpretation linking our conflict to the

wider system. He was surprised at the role reversal: instead of Diaspora communities

offering assistance in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it was the Jewish

communities in the US that required assistance from the Palestinian. He interpreted the

conflict between the Jewish director and me as a reflection of the splits within the Jewish

community in the US. While these splits within the American Jewish Diaspora (discussed

in the review of the literature) are very real, my interpretation of our conflict was

different. My experience of the planning process and working with the directors was of

being isolated and without any real partners in the process, and of continually facing

broken promises and broken commitments. While I experienced periods of hope, these

were embedded in isolation and despair. These experiences seemed more a reflection of

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[102] I told myself that it didn't matter whether or not they liked me, only that they be able to do a good job. I told myself that it was more important that they have a good working relationship with each other, and that my response to being shut out was petty. Nevertheless, I still felt frustrated and isolated by it. I hated being so dependent on others to carry through a project in which I had such a vested interest.

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the Palestinian experience of the peace process, than of the splits within the American

Jewish community. In psychoanalytic and group relations work, the experience of affects

or emotions that are unusual or foreign (not part of one's usual valence) may be

indicative of projective identification (Halton, 1994; Obholzer & Zagier Roberts, 1994b;

Wallach, 2004). In this case, the level of rage and despair that I experienced was so

overwhelming and debilitating, that I had fantasies of destroying the whole project and

walking away (a metaphorical suicide bombing). Since the intensity of these emotions

was so foreign to me, I understood them to be a mirroring of the experience of

Palestinians who resorted to violence in the face of such hopelessness and despair.

Conference Themes and Dynamics

The conference was rich and dynamic. Discussions moved fluidly from topic to

topic, past to present, political to personal, and outside to inside; and so, these reflections

cannot do full justice to the conference experience. I describe salient conference themes

below, most of which were discussed explicitly by conference directors and participants

during and after the conference. While I present the themes separately and in linear

fashion, most of the themes are inter-related and dynamic. Thus, an entirely

chronological rendering of events here is not possible.

The conference opened on Friday afternoon in a plenary session. Two members

(those with no previous group relations experience) arrived several minutes late and

missed the opening comments read by the conference directors. A number of participants

had gotten lost on the way to the conference site. They mused about how the experience

of being lost might be a metaphor for Diaspora. They introduced themselves to each

other, shared the meanings of their names, and offered associations to their names and to

the conference theme. There was a warmth and intimacy to the opening session that is

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rarely seen in large conferences. The remainder of the chapter will discuss conference

events thematically.

Gendered Roles and the Role of Gender

Gender issues that had been present between the co-directors and me continued

to play out in the pre-conference staff transition work. In the first staff meeting at the

conference site, the women expressed apprehension about the lack of female consultants

on staff. While they recognized that I had a strong role as conference creator, and was

"the woman behind the men" with "the power to reimburse," they were still concerned

that my role would be mostly non-speaking[103], and the impact the lack of a female

consulting voice would have on the dynamics of the conference.

In the first half of the conference, the male directors and I often perceived or

interpreted the same conference event entirely differently, in ways that were clearly

framed by gender. It was initially very frustrating for me not to be able to offer my

interpretation of this. For example, in one of the first small study groups, a number of

men were sharing their experiences, some disclosing traumas from childhood. The

disclosures had a practiced quality to them, and were not accompanied by much affect. I

could not help but notice that the women had been silent for most of the group. The

directors felt moved by the men's disclosure of sadness during the Study Group, while I

felt more attuned to what I perceived as the silencing of strong women's voices. When

women spoke more in the group, I thought the group came alive: whereas the directors

interpreted the same moments as an attack on them (the directors) or an inability to

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[103] Though as a "researcher with voice," I had the option to speak. As I noted in the previous chapter, the role was ambiguous. During conference events, I sat slightly outside the circle, taking notes on my laptop. Though I did not often speak, I remained a presence in the group.

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tolerate male sadness[104]. It seemed that it was intolerable for the group to see either

passionate/powerful women or depressed men.

Members were aware of and remarked on gendered patterns in their seating

configurations: in one study group, members noted they were seated in pairs of men and

pairs of women. In another, they were seated in a yin/yang pattern, with women on one

side and men on the other. During one study group session, there was a discussion about

the meaning of three women (Muslim, Jewish and Catholic) bringing in chairs from the

other work room, thus disrupting the circular configuration set up by the directors. The

group wondered: was this a series of individual acts by women (who found these smaller

chairs more comfortable); an attack on the conference directors; or an act of leadership?

One of the women challenged the directors: did they take into account that there were

short women in the conference, who might find the big chairs uncomfortable? Or were

they more concerned that the room look pretty? A male participant remarked, "Is this

how women take leadership in society? They change the whole social structure, and then

say 'I'm just cooking.'" The group tried to make sense of the fact that the conference was

created by a woman and directed by two men. Post-conference interviews revealed that

some women had greater difficulty finding their voices, and felt disempowered by not

having a female representative on the consulting staff:

> The fact that there was a woman director not speaking but she was there. There
> was a woman who owned the conference, who was paying for the salaries of

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[104] In another example from the study group. a few men explored fantasies of being a woman or of having breasts. I understood the men's fantasies as an attempt to explore and understand their more feminine parts, while the directors offered interpretations that sexualized the fantasy—from the desire *to be* a woman, to the desire *for* a woman. A woman in the group responded to this discussion in a visceral way—and literally felt nauseous, as if something had been ripped out from inside of her. Another woman responded by saying, "I could never imagine wanting to have a dick."A conference participant later offered another interpretation of the event: "That was a very interesting communication. I could use it as an analogy, I could never imagine to be a Jew or to be a Palestinian or to be a man or to be a woman…and it could go on."

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> people, paying for it, and yet she didn't have a voice. What does that mean in Israel? If the Israeli government listened to more women or the feminine side of themselves, maybe we wouldn't be in so much trouble…The dynamic between the directors and you was very obvious to all of us. Not that we saw the conflict between you, but that here was this woman who had created this, who was silent. And then there was all this about the women who were marginalizing themselves…there were women who were silencing themselves…(Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

> … But I don't really think I could see the women in them (the directors). And I don't think that that was necessarily available to us. I think softer emotions were maybe. I don't think being a woman was, through them. I don't know how hard we're supposed to try to push as members to have access to these things or whether we should just have access to what gets represented to us. I do feel a little bit like a woman should have been part of that thing, but that it would have shifted things, and you (the researcher) were there, in a way, so originally, I thought you're actually there and in a way you're really the puppeteer…But for a talking person and to have someone make interpretations and who has the body of the woman, it might have. (Conference member, immediate post-conference interview)

In the study group sessions, two female conference members (a Palestinian originally from the West Bank, and a Jew currently living in Israel) were particularly quiet. Members linked the silence of women in the group to the disappearance of women (specifically Hanan Ashrawri) on the political scene in Palestine following the breakdown of the Oslo peace process. In this way, the group enacted a piece of the gendered dynamic of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict within the group. One male conference member linked it to the larger Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the following way:

> In different ways it (the gender issue) was showing itself. Like the first (transition) day, when the staff was meeting—first four men talked, then women talked, and during the conference there were groups of men and women going in separate. So I thought probably what I can take from that, is there should be a very different way in which women as a group, look at Middle East issues and men as a group. And who is running the show, in terms of power relations? That would be men. So (it) would be interesting, to imagine if women had the authority, control about decision making and dialogue, how it would turn out to be. (Conference member, immediate post-conference interview)

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In the Institutional Event (IE), gender once again played a role. In the event's opening, members were tasked with breaking up into groups, for the purpose of studying the relatedness between groups in the context of the Israeli Palestinian conflict. Members suggested ideas for groups and themes they wanted to explore. A woman suggested a group in which they could use creative means to express what was going on in the conference. As the group began playing with names for a group, one suggestion—the "Pap Smears[105]"—drew a good amount of feminine energy and laughter. One man proposed forming a group called "Ghostbusters" to explore hidden meanings in the conference. One woman was very put off by the name of the former, and decided to join Ghostbusters, which had three men. The energy for the Pap Smears group dissipated. In the end, two groups formed: one had three men and one woman, and the other had four women and one man. The former group was Ghostbusters. The latter called itself "Ognieh Orange" or song of the orange (the first word being Arabic for song).

Ghostbusters met on the sun porch, a small room, just off of a larger meeting room (which was across the hall from the room where the plenary was held, and where the other group was meeting). The door between the larger meeting room and the hallway was left open, and the door to the sun porch was closed. The glass door afforded them a view of the larger meeting room. As the group talked, members of the Ognieh Orange group entered the larger meeting space adjacent to the sun porch. Two women played "heart and soul" on the piano. Some danced around and then sang songs from Fiddler on the Roof. While all this was happening in the next room, the Ghostbusters group

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[105] This related to an earlier discussion in the study group about whether there existed a "Palestinian-American princess" or PAP (as a counterpart to a Jewish American princess, or JAP.

continued to talk. They were clearly disturbed by the women[106], but seemed at a loss as to how to deal with them. Should they try to find another room in which to meet? Should they ask the women to move or to be quiet? If they had left the door open, they reasoned, they could have demonstrated their displeasure simply by closing it. "Maybe they'll stop." They seemed to me to be terrified to directly face the women in the next room. They resolved the dilemma by ignoring the women and continuing their discussion. The dynamic reminded me of my relationship with the conference directors, who I sometimes experienced as fearful and avoidant of me.

Both groups mirrored the management team: in that each contained predominantly one gender, with a lone member of the opposite sex. In each group, the minority member was also the least experienced in group relations work. Both groups also dispatched these less experienced members to meet with the management team, with little direction of what they were to do. Curiously, during the IE, while women missed having a female consulting voice, no women joined the management team during the IE session[107]. Two men joined the management team in the third and fourth sessions. In this way, the groups (men and women) continued to collude to deprive women of having a voice on the management team.

That gender themes were salient throughout the conference should not be a surprise. The silencing of women's voices in the conference mirrored the loss of the feminine voice in public life in Israel Palestine as a result of increased militarization and masculinization of those societies (Abdo & Lentin, 2002; Joseph, 2000; Mohanty, 2003,

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[106] While there was one man in that group, it was the women that the Ghostbusters group talked about.
[107] During the Institutional Event, individual participants had the option of joining the management team for a session, if they were authorized by their groups to do so.

2006; Peterson & Runyan, 1999; Sered, 2000). In group relations terms, this would be

seen as a splitting off and projection onto women of weakness and vulnerability, and

simultaneous splitting off and projection onto men of their strength and power. The

silencing of women's voices in the conference (and in Israeli and Palestinian society)

might be seen as a group level defense against the fear of women's power (by both men

and women who collude in the process). I realized later that I had also unconsciously

colluded with this dynamic in the planning process and in the conference itself, by hiring

two male co-directors, taking up a role of "researcher with voice," while muzzling my

voice at the same time.

Conflict and Differentiation vs. Avoidance/Disengagement

The conflict that had been brewing between the conference directors and me

finally hit a breaking point at the beginning of the second session of the IE. I had just

returned from observing the two groups in the IE, where the gender issues were

impossible to overlook. I felt strongly that the directors needed to address it. After I

entered the room, the directors continued to talk together, without acknowledging my

presence. They wondered (to each other) what was happening with the members (who I

had been observing until that point). I offered that I had some information that might be

pertinent, which they summarily dismissed. While their point about whether my sharing

my observations with them would be appropriate (e.g., whether conference members

would perceive my sharing observations of them as "spying") was well taken, the manner

in which I was dismissed brought back all of the anger and frustration of the preceding

year. My feeling of being muzzled by the conference directors appeared to parallel the

difficulty that women conference members had finding their voices. I thought that our

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difficulty facing our conflict was preventing the members from working conflicts

between themselves, and with us as a management group in the event. Fearing the

consequences of engaging the directors at that point with my anger, I left the

management room and called a trusted mentor for a consultation. I spent the remainder of

the session observing the other groups as they worked. During the break, clearly aware

that I was angry, the directors invited me to walk with them. At this time, I began to share

my pent up fury, which was aimed particularly at the Jewish director. We decided that it

was important for the work of the conference for us to continue this discussion during the

IE event (when the management group did its work publicly and could be observed). The

Palestinian director agreed to mediate. The discussion was, in fact, observed by the two

men who joined the management team, and thus the information was (presumably)

available to the membership. Once we were able to talk through the conflict, it seemed to

me that the directors were much more attuned to the women within the system.

Conflict avoidance in the membership manifested in a few ways. Many

conference members remarked during the conference that the two people who

represented the conflict—a Muslim Palestinian woman, and a Jewish woman living in

Israel were the most silent members of the study group. The Jewish woman felt shut

down, or silenced by the group. As she noted later:

> …I felt like I sort of kept being silenced, or silencing myself or something. In that
> sense that I felt there was something dynamic about that. Not really jumping in
> and actually dealing with it (specifically Israel/Palestine) in a more direct
> way…some of the conflicts or the differences, or whatever. I think that's what I
> wished I had done...I kept defaulting to silence. That felt dynamic—it felt I
> couldn't quite overcome it. Normally I would be a lot more engaged in a
> particular way. In this conference I was a bit more silent. That increased towards
> the end of the conference, that sense of silence. (Conference member, immediate
> post-conference interview)

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She and others hypothesized that the group might be conspiring to keep certain pairs

apart, such as the Palestinian and Jewish women, or men and women:

> … I felt (the Palestinian woman) was a bit of a counterpart for me… I felt like the
> two of us, there was something of a fear of actually having us really take each
> other on. Not that I—I'm not sure what that would look like. It was not a personal
> thing…(Conference member, immediate post-conference interview)

One participant reflected on the ways he avoided conflict during the conference, relating

it to inner conflicts about his Jewish identity:

> My father growing up believing that no one could be counted on, and hanging out
> with Jews was dangerous, even though it was so out of his awareness that he
> couldn't even speak to it. To him safety was money and dis-identification. I'm
> thinking is that part of why I wasn't so aggressive in this conference? Because I
> somehow had this association with being a pushy, aggressive Jew. What I
> probably would have been aggressive about—anti-Jewish things. When I think
> about some of conflicts I avoided. There may have been this quality of—I don't
> want to be like a settler…(Conference member, immediate post-conference
> interview)

Another member also felt the group had:

> … difficulty going to the Middle East or to go to some place of conflict that
> looked like the Middle East. When we would get close to it, and the group would
> retract…One example is the people who were from that region were more silent.
> And the last session, the last minutes of the last session, there was some kind of
> heated discussion between (the Palestinian woman and Orthodox Jewish man),
> and there was some kind of spark…It stayed there. It would get to silence when it
> was pursued. When conflict was pursued and silence would come and it would
> shift to another thing. (Conference member, immediate post-conference
> interview)

The Palestinian woman in question had a different perspective, feeling as if the group

was pushing her to fight:

> …So people looking for these things (for tears, for sadness). I thought myself, no,
> I'm looking for sun, I look for flower, I look for these things. But these people
> (are) looking for tears—looking for sadness. And they want to see the part of me,
> the conflict. Sorry, why you guys want me always to cry. Sorry, I get really tired
> of that. You want to project all your stuff on me. You want the Palestinian people
> to…What about you. This is your problem not my problem. I know my problem. I
> know occupation. I don't need anyone to teach me about occupation. I live

> occupation. I grow up with it. And I know the solution—to get rid of occupation. Period. Clear. You want me, you need to hear me… Give me my state let me feel independent. That's my solution. People listen what they need to listen. Looking for tears, looking for sadness, looking for conflict. Really, they want conflict. Therefore I don't know if they saw conflict on my side. I have conflict. But way I express it is different from them. I also have my own approach. I believe in peace, I don't believe in conflict. I felt really very clear about these things at the conference. (Conference member, immediate post-conference interview)

The group finally succeeded in getting her into a conflict. In the final minutes of the last study group, in which there had been a fair amount of discussion about Israel Palestine, the Orthodox Jewish man asked her what she was doing there (in Palestine). Her response was loud and impassioned, beginning with "I BORN THERE! WHERE DO YOU WANT ME TO GO?" and continuing on in this vein beyond the time boundaries of the event (the directors left at the start of her response). This moment was referred to by a number of participants as being particularly memorable. It was the most forceful way that the Palestinian-Israeli conflict was brought into the here and now of the conference.

This member's experience of being pressured into talking about conflict, while other women were feeling shut down, reflects the thinking in group relations literature that particular ethnic groups, through processes of projection and projective identification hold particular roles on behalf of society (D. N. Berg & Smith, 1987; Horwitz, 1983; Reed & Noumair, 2000; Skolnick & Green, 2006). In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it is the Palestinians that are ascribed the role of "terrorist," while the Israelis are viewed as the peace-seeking people. While her words were far from violent or terroristic, they were powerful, loud, and impassioned, to the point that one of the directors felt it important to "hang around" outside the room during the break as the discussion went on. This may also be linked to a fear of women's aggression, which was also evident throughout the conference.

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Two participants (below) suggested that the lack of political diversity within the

conference membership may have served to dampen conflicts:

> I was concerned also a bit about the political diversity, that it would be not so
> much, that it would be pretty much people who identified with the peace camp
> and who would recognize that in each other, you can have people in the peace
> camp who say I'm in the peace camp and you're not—to each other—but I
> assumed it would be people who recognized that in each other, and it was. Insofar
> as one can tell, we didn't talk about that stuff a whole lot. There was some stuff
> that was said that didn't get challenged, and probably, if there were people who
> had clearly different views than all of that, some of that stuff would have been
> challenged. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

> Since my expectation changed, I didn't get disappointed. If I had kept the
> expectations, I would have been disappointed that this was not, that we didn't
> have enough members. One thing that was disappointing, is that therefore, in US
> we don't get people who are opposite, who are opposing opinions to come to one
> place and interact as opposing poles. Those who believe the same go and interact
> among themselves. We didn't have a member who was very adamantly pro-
> occupation, for instance, or against Palestinians, or adamantly against Jews, even.
> Therefore it was hard to have a debate in a way. (Conference participant,
> immediate post-conference interview)

One member hypothesized that conflict was avoided out of fear of potential repercussions

if one were discovered to be in dialogue with the other:

> Maybe how much…this conflict is very violent conflict, maybe we need also to
> ask ourselves how much that violence and fear that is there, would affect people
> in terms of way able to go there and examine the conflict. It would have an
> important effect. People especially from the region, come over here, were very
> conscious of what they would say, so it would not end up haunting them back in
> the region…and I can tell you that I was in discussions between sessions, during
> the break time, people had an easier time to go and discuss a little more details in
> terms of facts of life over there, life over there, in smaller groups, trusting each
> other and that would not be brought up in the conference sessions. And also
> talking about it, to say, yes, I am afraid. Even other people, including myself,
> expressed a fear… this conference was on the net, and anybody looking under my
> name could see that I am going to some conference on this issue, and check the
> names of others... So I could be, we could be persecuted in a way… that feeling of
> fear that this one could be persecuted because he sat down with Palestinians and
> wanted to be active, and do some social network, or one sat down with an
> Israeli…We didn't explore it that much during the conference, how much that
> affect our interaction. When we were in the large group, for example, there was
> silence, we asked people from the region, we would like to know more. But they

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> would not come forward to share more...Outside of conference session, people would find each other, three or four people, that wouldn't get offended to talk about certain things. So there we talk about it. So some gatherings would happen, with a certain theme that would be easier get to into it deeper. (Conference participant, three month follow-up interview)

The avoidance of conflict in the conference may be understood in a number of ways. The anxiety attached to both inter-personal conflict and in relation to the Palestinian Israeli conflict was present from the start of the planning process. The inability of the directors and me to manage our anxiety and face the conflict directly was likely communicating the impression, both consciously and unconsciously, that we were ill-equipped to work with member conflicts. Once we were able to talk about our conflicts, then conflict became more visible in the membership. The intimacy of the conference may have further contributed to the difficulty addressing conflict. Finally, the avoidance, or what was described at times to be "disengagement" may also reflect the larger issue of disengagement from the conflict in Israel-Palestine[108]. The avoidance of dialogue may be a defense against having to face painful truths about one's own group, were one to truly engage with the other. The group stated its desire to hear from the representatives from the conflict region. At the same time the group behaved in ways that actually kept the parties from interacting. Finally, the avoidance of conflict may be understood through the next theme.

"Twinning" vs. Trinity

The conference directorate consisted of three people (the two conference directors and me). As reported earlier, the two conference directors maintained a very friendly

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[108] It was noted that the word "disengagement" refers to the name given by the Israelis to the dismantlement of Jewish settlements in Gaza. The building of the separation barrier is another example of Israel's increased level of disengagement from Palestinians.

Pre-Conference and Conference Dynamics

relationship, built upon previous group relations experiences, and often referred to

themselves as "brothers." From the opening session,[109] the conference membership did

not see the directors as being particularly differentiated from each other and often

referred to them as "twins." Some members felt that their closeness made it hard to

discuss conflict. As one remarked:

> The conference felt that it stayed very safe. I wondered if something to do with a co-director pair that they seemed to get along together so well. Somehow everything seemed so correct and comfortable. On the whole, of course there were uncomfortable moments. But I think I expected it to be more difficult, and I think maybe it was size, or maybe it was contained. I don't think it was less rich because of it. I just think that there was something that was containing, and maybe that was a positive thing…I think the co-directors in a way made everything about unity and peace…(Conference member, immediate post-conference interview)

In addition to this pairing of the directors[110], the number three took on significance

throughout the conference. One member made meaning of it in the following way:

> … I noticed the significance of three—three as being the unit of democracy. This is what came to me, and I hadn't thought of it before…When you have a two party system, for example, it's not a democracy yet. You need at least three components. It is like either/or… I noticed that a lot of people, more than just one or two, they were speaking in threes. I also noticed three coming up…There is something in this three. There were three of you. It ended up there were three, When the IE happened, there were three subgroups, then we had when we were sitting in the study group, I was seeing threes being enacted, in terms of sitting, three chairs different from the other chairs. One time we had three pairs. And we had discussions that started with the dove pin[111]--a Palestinian woman giving it to Jewish woman who sold it to (the Orthodox Jew) had the three component to it. So I kept seeing the three repeating itself. So I thought, the debate is either this or that, so when the first conflict comes in even if you want a vote, you need at least three people. Even when you want to do research, to have any meaningful result, you need an "N" of three. So I thought, three is unit of democracy or unit of

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[109] when one conference member (who had shifted from a staff role) noted that the two directors could exchange one of their shoes, and still have matching shoes

[110] Pairing is one of the basic assumptions posited by Bion (1961) to describe a particular form of non-rational processes in groups. It is often accompanied by a sense of hope for the future, in a group that is avoiding dealing with difficult realities at hand. This phenomenon was described in chapter 2.

[111] During one study group, a Palestinian admired the pin of a dove worn by the Orthodox Jew. The pin was made by a Palestinian woman, and given to a Jewish woman, who sold it to this conference member.

complex way of thinking, so I'm not thinking either/or… for peacemaking. I kept thinking throughout the conference, what does anything have to do with peacemaking? And then I thought how does three have to do with peacemaking. So this is how I put it together…(Conference member, immediate post-conference interview)

During the IE, one group referred to the management team as the "Trinity": the men were assigned the roles of father and son. I was named the Holy Spirit, as I was perceived to have the capacity to waft in and out of the groups, permeating all the boundaries. The theme of twinning vs. Trinity was enacted during the IE closing plenary. Members were offered (and took up) the opportunity to organize the IE closing plenary, in consultation with the management. It was agreed that each of the two groups, as well as the management team would present (in skit form) their learning from the event. One of the groups presented a skit in which the two directors, now represented by two women, leaned in exactly the same way with exactly the same expression, and changing position at exactly the same time. Behind them, the researcher, now represented by a man, sat behind them typing on his laptop and whispering into their ears. As they did this, three members, Catholic, Jewish, and Muslim, sang simultaneously in three different languages: Turkish, Hebrew, and Arabic.

As a staff group, our skit was strikingly similar, in which the two male directors walked in lock-step with each other, and gradually began moving in different directions, becoming startled as they encountered the other. At first, they avoided me as I sat typing, and our initial encounters were hostile. At the end of the skit they sat down next to me (one on each side), as I held up a sign that read "BOO!" Our skit reflected the evolution of our relationship: as the directors became more differentiated from each other, my relationship with them became easier: that is, as long as they were twinning, the conflict

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played out *between* them and me. As they became more differentiated, I was more freed

from being the center or target of the conflict.

The significance of twinning and of the meaning of three may also be seen in the

larger context of the Israeli Palestinian conflict. While the conflict is often framed as a

two party one between two peoples—Israelis and Palestinians—there are in fact other

parties involved[112], all of which are using this "fighting pair" for their own purposes. In a

follow-up interview, one of the conference directors spoke specifically about the role of

religion in this regard.

> I think the Conference was about—the very design was around a conflict between
> two peoples, when the actual conflict…may be expressed by two people but is
> very much a broader conflict between east and west… Jerusalem isn't a city of
> two religions, it's a city of three religions. So much of the conflict on the ground
> has as much to do with Christianity and Christian countries as it does Palestinians
> and Jews. Or Arabs and Israelis. So aren't we at some level—the whole design of
> the conference was … built on this kind of scapegoating the used parties.
> (Conference co-director, three month follow-up interview)

A conference member described the dynamic of Israelis and Palestinians as a fighting

pair in the following way:

> I had strong feeling towards the conflict before and still have. My strong feelings
> include pain, sadness, and anger. My attitude is towards uniting people of both
> groups against their common enemy: Those who benefit from having Jews and
> Palestinians hating and killing each other. The beneficiaries are like those who
> gather around and enjoy betting on a cockfight. We know that to have a good
> fight each group needs to support and cheer their animal. The fight is not even a
> fair fight. The game is a corrupt game. What is most saddening for me is that the
> mere corruption makes most people who are against corruption cheer the fight
> anyway, just with more passion, hoping that the weak starved rooster would one
> day win the fight. This continues to work well for those who bet on the stronger to
> win. The more powerful corrupt section keeps the fight uneven and unjust, the
> group opposing unfairness keep the game excited by cheering the victim
> passionately and loud, which attracts millions of people to take side and

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[112] The United States government, as well as Diaspora communities of each group in the US; the Arab
world; Christian groups; European nations, etc. may each use the conflict and its parties to further their own
policy or imperialistic goals, as well as to distract from internal domestic conflicts.

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> participate in betting, in turn the powerful better adds to excitement by special
> effects of media technology and psychology, resulting to perpetuation of corrupt
> dynamics and winning of the powerful exploiters and misery of both "roosters";
> the stronger and the weaker roosters are both full of fear, and both fight for their
> lives regardless of the fact that the stronger wins every time. (Conference
> member, three month follow-up survey)

The United States government, as well as Diaspora communities of each group in the US;

the Arab world; Christian groups; European nations, etc. each use the conflict and its

parties to further their own policy or imperialistic goals, as well as to distract from

internal domestic conflicts.

Peacemaking vs. Conflict or the Terror of Peacemaking

Themes of death and mourning appeared throughout the conference. On the first

day, a participant referred to the room in which the study group met as "the wake room"

or the "mourning parlor." There were other references to suicide and suicide bombers (in

the opening session when one member noted that his/her name was the same as a

renowned suicide bomber). Some hypothesized that the conference was small because

people hesitated to come to a peacemaking conference where they might be forced to face

the losses they sustained and the resulting sadness. Conflict is easier than peacemaking:

with conflict comes passion and excitement, while peace brings sadness and mourning.

As one of the conference directors noted after the conference:

> …, talking about peace or peacemaking is a very very hard thing to do. I don't
> want to be very simplistic right now, but one of my impressions is that in order to
> do peace or to make peace or peacemaking in general, there's a lot of things have
> to be contained or (held). And one of it is that peacemaking is a very very sad
> thing to do. And at the same time… if you don't deal with this choice, if you
> don't deal with this content, the other choices will be more hazardous, and more
> fatal, more harmful. So peacemaking is an uneasy—I'm not trying to be
> simplistic, just something about sadness, depression, and to be in contact with the
> very primitive emotional experiences. (Conference co-director, post-conference
> interview)

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Conference Theme vs. Conference Process ("Double Task" of the conference)

Many in the conference, particularly those with prior group relations experience, struggled with how to integrate the double task of the conference: that is how to incorporate the conference theme of trying to understand the role of Diaspora communities in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with group relations methods. The former implies "there and then" reflection and discussion of events outside of the conference setting. Group relations methodology traditionally focuses on the "here and now" in the temporary institution of the conference. Former staff members, in addition to bringing in their wealth of experience and knowledge about group relations theory and practice, also imported their experiences with group relations traditions and organizations[113], and were not entirely convinced that the method could be applied in this way. As previously noted, this skepticism had considerable impact on pre-conference dynamics and recruitment. The conference allowed them to see how the political manifests in the personal. As one member described it after the conference, "I think you did something that was very very powerful, relative to parallel process to the conflict of any nation. You took the government, and you made them into citizens. That's what it felt like."

While experienced group relations conference members came to appreciate the value of applying the method to larger political issues, there were times when it seemed that the pre-occupation with the dynamics of the group relations world, as well as assumptions about what "is supposed to happen" in group relations conferences, interfered with the focus on the conference theme. One member, who had never attended a group relations conference before noted:

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[113] many of which are currently struggling.

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> I learned (whether it's true or not) that people schooled in the Tavistock approach too readily assume the presence of unconsciously active aggression, imputing it to the group as a whole, without specifying anyone, or to individual members without identifying any persuasive evidence of that aggression beyond their own inclination to perceive it. This seems to me to be itself an act of both aggression and projection. I heard a lot of plausible talk about parallel processes, but without much apparent foundation beyond the expectation and speculation. Later addition, on further reflection: I'm aware that as much as I value the attempt to "tune in" to unconscious processes, I also tend to perceive it, at least as practiced at the conference, as unfounded and usually ungenerous speculation that contradicts the mitzvah of having a "good eye"; that is, seeing the actions of others in the best possible light (i.e., attributing only positive motivations). (Conference member, immediate post-conference evaluation)

As one of the directors noted, the double task could be used defensively: anxiety about the personal could evoke a flight to the political, and anxiety about the political could evoke a flight to the personal.

The Complexity of Identity

Conference membership was diverse in terms of religious, ethnic and geographic representation. Members and staff of the conference had multiple identities[114] and sometimes ambivalent relationships to parts of their identity: e.g., a child of Asian immigrants with little attachment to the parents' homeland; a Palestinian with Israeli citizenship; a Jewish American ambivalent about the Jewish aspect of his identity; an Arab Jew who grew up in Asia, and a Palestinian woman with "incomplete" identity (manifested in the two-year "temporary" passports). Some Jewish participants expressed anxiety about facing various aspects of their identity, or being put in the position of being a "representative" of that particular identity group, and particularly feared being in the role of "occupier."

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[114] The complexities of multiple identities and crossing the boundaries of identity have been cogently described by Dallalfar (2009), Roffan (2009) and Farsakh (2009).

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> Throughout, it felt like a very heterogeneous sort of group—certainly in terms of religious representation, but also, geographic—Israelis, Palestinian American, it felt like everything was there—Palestinians living within Israel, then a Palestinian from (the West Bank). Everything was represented: then I had to represent the Jews from Israel. It felt something like that…I think something about me being (the) only person from Israel who was Jewish. I felt like that was the world I was pulled into. I think that had there been more people, had it been a larger conference, possibly, I might have been freer to be more fluid with other parts of my identity. (Conference member, immediate post-conference interview)

Members pondered whether complex and conflicted identity was inherent to living in the Diaspora.

Diaspora vs. Exile

Participants explored the meaning of Diaspora on a personal level: a Jewish man viewed himself more as part of an Eastern European Diaspora, rather than of a Jewish one dispersed from the Holy Land. A Palestinian citizen of Israel felt as though he lived in the Diaspora, even while living in his homeland. A Persian American described the conflict of living in Diaspora, and the guilt of living in the US when others could not. Returning to the homeland was like being again in Diaspora. For the Arab Jewish woman who lived in Asia, Europe, and the US, Diaspora is exile. She found pieces of her identity in each of the places where she lived, and hasn't felt able to bring all of herself anywhere. In one of the first study groups, a member was surprised to suddenly find herself feeling overwhelmed by tears thinking about Jerusalem. Neither Jewish nor Arab, she wondered, "What right do I have to stake a claim on Jerusalem?" Diaspora implies leaving—a land or a people—and being an outsider. Members who had originally been hired to be in the staff role discussed the experience of being exiled to the membership Diaspora of the conference.

Pre-Conference and Conference Dynamics

Truth vs. Lies

The theme of truth vs. lies arose in relation to two issues: 1) the number of

conference members and 2) the conference theme. Staff talked about whether participants

were made aware that the conference would be so small, and that some of the staff had

lied to their families about the number of participants. In pre-conference transition work,

the transitioning staff confronted the directors about truthfulness to themselves and new

members about the number of people who would take part in the conference. Did we lie

to potential participants about the size of the conference? Were the directors truthful

during the planning day with staff about how much of a say they would have in the

design? Who owns the truth in the Palestinian Israeli conflict?

Researcher vs. Conference Creator

As noted in the previous chapter, I carried multiple roles before and during the

conference. In addition, I had multiple professional and social connections to participants.

I had met all but two participants previously. None of the participants reported on the

research aspect of the conference in a negative light:

> The question was brought up about what effect it has on us that Tracy is sitting
> there typing away? But it wasn't explored much. (Conference member, three
> month follow-up interview)

> The presence of you in the room in a lot of the sessions pretty quickly became
> pretty much in the background. I think it was a baseline presence that I don't think
> brought a lot up. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

One participant thought that these multiple roles and connections I had to most

conference participants may have made it easier to integrate the research component into

the conference:

> In fact being in conferences where there has been research. … I think, that your
> presence was I think some of it had to do with not just your identity, but that you

> were just one person, and you were very personally involved, so it was sort of – hard to project on you in the same way that I imagine was projected on a team of people who looked like traditional consultants…Part of it was because we were all very supportive of the task. If there were people who were less aware of the history—who were less connected to you or staff members, I think it might have been experienced very differently. There might have been a lot more paranoia about it than there was. I think being the creator as well as researcher was a different thing. I was imagining if it had not been you, if it had been someone else, might have been a different thing as well. I think it helped in terms of not reinforcing the paranoia and stuff. (Conference member, immediate post-conference interview)

My multiple connections with participants may have pushed negative feelings about both researcher and creator roles underground. As previously stated, I was the "Holy Spirit" in the Trinity of the conference directorate. Not incidentally, it was the predominantly male group in the IE that named itself "Ghostbusters," perhaps expressing the resistance to/aggression towards the female authority figure/researcher in the system that was lurking beneath the surface.

Summary

This chapter reported on the major themes and dynamics that played out in the planning and implementation of the *Authority, Leadership and Peacemaking* conference. These themes were concerned with gender, conflict and disengagement, peacemaking and conflict, the complexity of identity, "twinning" vs. Trinity, Diaspora and exile, and truth and lies, and not surprisingly, reflected some of the salient dynamics in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Additional themes (conference theme vs. conference process, and conference creator vs. conference researcher) reflected some of the dynamics in group relations organizations in the US.

The ambivalence of the sponsoring organizations and directorate (as well as the wider public, as evidenced by the low registration) reflects the anxiety of addressing the

topic of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the truths that might be revealed if it were

addressed head on. While the intimacy of the conference offered rich opportunities for

learning, it also precluded other opportunities (e.g., for studying large group dynamics

and conflict).

The next chapter explores participant learning. Some, but not all of the themes

described here were areas of learning for participants. While a few participants remarked

on gender as an issue in the conference, only one declared it to be an area of learning.

Chapter 5

PARTICIPANT LEARNING

Introduction

This chapter reports findings from participant surveys and interviews immediately post-conference and three months after the conference, with a focus on participant learning. The chapter is divided into two sections: the first section reports on 1) prior experience of participants (with group relations or with Israeli-Palestinian dialogue) and 2) learning goals. The second reports on participant learning at and after the conference.

Since the purpose of the interviews and surveys was to evaluate the impact of the conference on participant learning and action, survey and interview questions were framed and data analyzed according to specific sensitizing concepts (Patton, 2002). I was specifically looking for what participants learned about the conference theme of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the role of Diaspora communities in it, and about group relations concepts of authority and leadership. Having conducted research at two previous group relations conferences, I also looked to see whether there might be similar learning patterns here (such as highly individual personal learning, vs. systemic learning). I first looked at interview transcripts individually. Then I cut the data by question, examining responses in aggregate and looking for themes. Finally I cut the data by theme. Survey data was also aggregated by question and examined for thematic content. Some of the learning themes (around identity, Diaspora and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict) overlapped with conference themes outlined in the previous chapter, though others did not.

Participant Learning

Participant Experience and Learning Goals

Members came to the conference with a variety of goals and levels of experience,

in regard both to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and to group relations work. Of the nine

conference members, two had never attended a group relations conference, three had

attended one to three previously, and four had more extensive experience in member and

staff roles at group relations conferences[115]. Those with previous group relations

experience were especially enthusiastic about participating in a project using a new

application of the model. Only one of the directors had previous experience in Jewish-

Arab dialogue work. In the membership, only one participant had such experience.

Participants also reported different levels of knowledge and understanding of the Israeli-

Palestinian conflict in general and of each side's narrative in particular. At the same time,

the group was fairly homogeneous in terms of political orientation vis-à-vis the conflict.

All tended to be left of center and had some empathy toward the position of the

Palestinians. There were no participants who characterized themselves as "Zionist" or

"pro-occupation," though I had approached organizations from across the political

spectrum (staying away from extremes on both sides). The issue of recruitment will be

examined further later in this chapter and in the discussion.

Those surveyed had a wide range of response from little understanding of the

conflict to a very good understanding of the conflict. Four of the respondents felt they

had a good understanding of the conflict, and one reported having some understanding.

Similarly, participants also had a range of levels of familiarity with each side's narrative

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[115] For the sake of clarity, the word "member" is used to designate all conference participants not in a staff role, and will include those on the staff who transitioned into the member role. The word "participants" will be used to describe all who were present at the conference, including the conference directors, conference members and me.

Participant Learning

of the conflict. All had at least a little familiarity with each side's narrative. Participants

had somewhat more familiarity with the Israeli narrative than with the Palestinian

narrative: one was a little familiar, three were somewhat familiar, four were familiar, and

two were very familiar with the Israeli narrative. With the Palestinian narrative, two were

a little familiar, four were somewhat familiar, two were familiar and two were very

familiar. Higher levels of familiarity with the former may be due to the ubiquity of this

Israeli narrative in the American media.

The combined responses to the pre-conference survey questions of staff and

participants can be found in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Pre-Conference Survey Responses[116]

Question	Mean	S.D.
How do you rate your knowledge/understanding of the Israeli Palestinian conflict? (N=7)	3.71	.95
How familiar are you with the Israeli narrative of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? (N=10)	3.70	.95
How familiar are you with the Palestinian narrative of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? (N=10)	3.40	1.07

1= no understanding/not at all familiar
2= a little understanding/a little familiar
3= some understanding/somewhat familiar
4= a good understanding/familiar
5= a very good understanding/very familiar

Participants were asked about their goals for themselves in the conference in pre and

post-conference surveys, and in interviews. A few did not report any particular goals

prior to coming to the conference, but when asked in interviews reported a general goal to

learn more about themselves. One said that experiential learning was like "an adventure

in self-discovery." A few wanted to learn more about group dynamics and managing

interpersonal conflict: "to understand the nature of misunderstanding between people."

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[116] Prior to the conference, questionnaires were sent to all those who were going to serve on staff. This questionnaire was administered a few months prior to, and was slightly different from the pre-conference survey distributed to members in the week before the conference. Therefore, only those who were previously designated as staff are included in the results for the first question.

Participant Learning

Several participants noted multiple goals that were personal, intellectual, professional,

and political:

> I wanted to learn about Tavistock work, I wanted to learn what that work could teach me about group relations, to see how group identity forms, to see if, to find out if I could see something that looked to me like a group unconscious developing. To see through what processes group become a group…to look at the relationship between individuals and the group, what groups do through individuals, and what individuals do with each other to constitute a group—what those two things do to articulate with each other. I was hoping to meet people who would be interested in ongoing Israel-Palestine work after sharing this experience, but I wasn't necessarily expecting that. I wanted to look specifically at dynamics around leadership and authority and power, and responsibility, how people do or don't take those, how they respond to them, accept them or reject them, not just how people do that, but how group does that. I also wanted to… part of thing about diversity, I was looking forward to making closer connections than I generally do, especially with Palestinians. (Conference Member, evaluation survey response)

At the same time there was an interest in learning more about the Palestinian Israeli

conflict in particular:

> I've always been kind of interested in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, as I've always been interested in any conflicts that seem unresolved-able like that, and how that impacts people who live and try to thrive in that kind of environment, how do they go about doing that, and what are the impediments to it, and I probably as I think about of all had some question about my own ability to attach to it, because that's thousands of miles away and I've never been there, and so I don't really know it. Secondly, I just wondered if there was any similarity or difference between other types of environments of abuse, are the words that I would use, and how I handled it in my own life, and how they handled it, (they being the Palestinians and Israelis) handle it in their lives…I was also very interested in (and I don't know if the conference completely answered it for me), the whole notion of coexistence in that kind of environment where there has been so much abuse. You just wonder: what is the path to forgiveness for everyone? How do you learn to live with it and move on? I don't think any one has any answers…(Conference Member, Interview)

For directors and for most staff who transitioned to a member role, there was personal

interest in the topic, as well as specific interest in seeing how or whether a group relations

Participant Learning

model could be applied to conflict resolution work in general, and to the Israeli-

Palestinian conflict in particular:

> I wanted to feel successful. I wanted to accomplish…to have it be both a group relations conference and something that addressed issues related to Israeli-Palestinian conflict…so those were my first goals-- to see if those two things could happen in one. I wanted to have a larger membership, than we had, so my goal was to have...I wanted to come away with some clarity around… how and if group relations work could be applied to…issues related to conflict resolution…(Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

For some that were actively involved in group relations organizations in the US, interest

in this conference was also connected to various struggles of group relations

organizations to survive, and to keep the work relevant:

> …the idea that this conference needed to happen for reasons larger than your dissertation, for reasons that were linked to group relations system in the US, and to (the sponsoring organizations)—all those factors were sort of tied into goals. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

Some participants were interested particularly in understanding more about the role of

Diasporas. As one noted:

> I wanted to explore my experience as well as others' with living in Diaspora. Also, group experiential learning makes me better understand the dynamics of society at large in relation to question of occupation and ability of having open dialogue about the issues such as ethnocentricity, power relations, human rights, and citizenship when it comes to religion and state. Third, my goal was to be a part of an ongoing group experiential learning about how people in Diaspora could gain authority and esteem in direction of peace-making in Middle East and the rest of the world, since the two are inter-related. (Conference Participant, survey response)

> Salient goals of participants prior to coming to the conference are noted in Table 2

below. The number of participants listing a particular goal is in the right hand column:

Participant Learning

Table 2 Learning Goals

Learning Goals	Number
Get a better understanding of managing interpersonal conflict	5
Palestinian-Israeli conflict and peacemaking	4
Diaspora	3
Explore personal identity issues	2
Group relations and Tavistock methods	2
Learn more about self	2
Authority and leadership	2
Personal biases and prejudices	1
Meet and stay engaged with people involved in I-P work	1
Obtain continuing education credits	1
Help out (conference creator and conference co-director	1

Conference and Post-Conference Learning

Members' responses to the survey questions in the post-conference evaluation were highly individualized and variable. Responses to questions on the post conference evaluation are noted in table 3. There was a wide range of responses to Likert questions regarding:

- What participants learned about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (including the effectiveness of the directors in contributing to such learning)

- Changes in feelings or attitudes towards one's own or other identity group

- Contributions of the various conference events to learning

This is consistent with anecdotal reports, group relations literature (described in chapter 2), and with my own research of two conferences in 2008.

Participant Learning

Table 3: Post Conference Evaluation Responses

Question	1	2	3	4	5	N/A or Don't know	Mean
To what extent did the conference provide learning opportunities described in the brochure?	0	0	11.1% (1)	77.8% (7)	11.1% (1)	0	4.00
To what extent was the conference what you expected it to be?	0	11.1% (1)	22.2% (2)	33.3% (3)	33.3% (3)	0	3.89
To what extent have you achieved your learning goals during the conference?	0	0	33.3% (3)	22.2% (2)	33.3% (3)	11.1% (1)	4.00
To what extent did you learn about the ways leadership and authority emerges and is taken up in groups?	0	0	33.3% (3)	66.6% (6)	0	0	3.67
To what extent did each of the following events contribute to your learning?							
Study Group	0	0	22.2% (2)	44.4% (4)	33.3% (3)	0	4.11
Institutional Event	0	11.1% (1)	22.2% (2)	33.3% (3)	33.3% (3)	0	3.89
Review and Role Analysis Group*	0	11.1% (1)	22.2% (2)	44.4% (4)	22.2% (2)	0	3.78
Conference Discussion	11.1% (1)	0	44.4% (4)	33.3% (3)	11.1% (1)	0	3.33
How much have you learned about the Israeli Palestinian conflict?	11.1% (1)	22.2% (2)	11.1% (1)	55.5% (5)	0	0	3.11
How much have you learned about the Israeli narrative of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?	22.2% (2)	33.3% (3)	11.1% (1)	22.2% (2)	11.1% (1)	0	2.67
How much have you learned about the Palestinian narrative of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?	22.2% (2)	0	22.2% (2)	55.6% (5)	0	0	3.11
To what extent has participation in this conference affected you personally?	0	0	11.1% (1)	44.4% (4)	33.3% (3)	11.1% (1)	4.25
To what extent do you think participation in this conference will affect you professionally?	11.1% (1)	0	33.3% (3)	33.3% (3)	22.2% (2)	0	3.56
To what extent have your feelings/attitudes toward your own identity group been affected by participation in the conference?	22.2% (2)	0	22.2% (2)	0	22.2% (2)	0	3.33
To what extent have your feelings/attitudes toward the other identity group been affected by participation in the conference?	22.2% (2)	0	33.3% (3)	33.3% (3)	11.1% (1)	0	3.11
To what extent do you think participation in this conference will affect your activities within your own community?	0	0	44.4% (4)	33.3% (3)	22.2% (2)	22.2% (2)	3.43
To what extent do you think participation in this conference will affect your activities with the other identity group?	0	11.1% (1)	44.4% (4)	44.4% (4)	0	0	3.33
How effective did you find the conference directors/consulting staff to be in:							
Illuminating the dynamics of the various events you participated in?	0	22.2% (2)	0	55.6% (5)	22.2% (2)	0	3.78

Participant Learning

	1	2	3	4	5		Mean
Illuminating the dynamics of conflict?	0	33.3% (3)	11.1% (1)	44.4% (4)	11.1% (1)	0	3.33
Illuminating the dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?	11.1% (1)	22.2% (2)	22.2% (2)	33.3% (3)	11.1% (1)	0	3.11
Helping you to understand your community's role in the conflict?	11.1% (1)	22.2% (2)	55.6% (5)	11.1% (1)	0	0	2.67
Helping you to understand the relationship between your conference roles and your external roles?	11.1% (1)	0	22.2% (2)	33.3% (3)	22.2% (2)	0	3.63
Relative to other kinds of experiential or learning or dialogue frameworks you have experienced, how effective did you find this conference to be?	0	0	0	0	100% (8)	0	5.00
To what extent was your overall experience of the conference worthwhile?	0	0	0	22.2% (2)	77.8% (7)	0	4.78
N=9							4.32

1= very little or none/ not very or not at all effective
2= a little/a little effective
3= some/somewhat effective
4= a great deal/effective
5= a very great deal/very effective

Participant Learning

It is notable that despite this variability in responses, members unanimously found

the conference to be very effective relative to other kinds of experiential learning or

dialogue frameworks they have experienced. In addition, members found their overall

experience of the conference to be worthwhile or very worthwhile. All but one of the

members would recommend the conference to others. One would recommend it "with

preparation." The member who said they would not recommend the conference noted:

> However, I would participate in such a conference again, if I had certain assurances about who would participate, and would then reconsider whether to recommend it.
> Later addition: The sense of enthusiasm I convey about the conference has grown as I've spoken about it with a few people. (Conference Member, survey)

This suggests that the conference experience and learning is much greater than the sum of

its parts, and that conference learning does not stop at the conference boundary. Rather,

participants continued to think about and make meaning of their conference experiences

long after the conference ended. For some, there was a sense that something had shifted,

but it was more difficult to pinpoint. Learning is still percolating:

> It's too soon to tell. I think that at least for some time, and maybe for a long time, I'll have a different pair of shades to wear when I'm in a group. To watch and perceive and think a little differently about what's going on and maybe as a result act somewhat differently. But I don't know really. Most of what I learned *from* the conference, I didn't learn *at* the conference, but afterward. Most of what I learned at the conference was things I knew already as concepts, but that I had very vivid experiences of. Since the conference I learned a thing or two that I didn't know as before. So how that will change me as a person, I don't know. But it's present to me, and wasn't before. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

The unanimously positive response to the conference is unusual, and may be

due in part to the way that participants self selected. Typically, there will be participants

who love the experience and wish to return, and those who hate it. This kind of intensive

experiential learning isn't for everyone. The intimacy and the commitment of all

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participants to this conference likely contributed to the sense of it as a worthwhile

endeavor.

What participants (directors and members) took from the conference was often

personal and highly variable. Eight participants reported that the most important learning

they took was of a personal nature. Related to this was learning about identity and

learning about leadership and authority (particularly how participants personally take up

authority). Participants also learned about Diaspora from both a personal and political

perspective. Some learned more about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Participants who

were deeply involved in group relations work gained a greater understanding of possible

new applications of the method, and the sense that the personal is political. Table 4 below

illustrates salient learning participants took from the conference. The left hand column

refers to the theme around which the learning took place. The right hand column refers to

the number of participants who reported learning in that area:

Table 4

Participant Learning (Themes)	Number of Participants
Personal Learning (greater confidence, greater courage, more "grounded," different view of childhood experience)	8
Identity	5
Diaspora	5
Israeli-Palestinian Conflict	5
Leadership and Authority	4
Group Relations (how it can be used for peacemaking/conflict resolution/other applications)	4
Personal is Political	2
The Role of "Others" (in learning about personal identity)	2
Learning about the "other" and personal bias	2

Participant Learning

Personal Learning

Personal learning took many forms, including greater confidence, a sense of

feeling more "grounded," "reinvigorated," or having more courage. For some, the

learning felt transformational.

> The most meaningful was the last closing session. When I was sitting in that room and I was completely turned around. Literally for the first 15 minutes of that closing session, I was really disoriented. Wait, what room is this? Where am I? Was I in this room? Is this where we started? Where are we? I was totally turned around. Which I think for me was a metaphor of how totally transformative that experience was. Because everyone said—this is the same room we were in on Friday afternoon… That was a very very very powerful moment for me. That my whole perspective had shifted…(Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

Another participant remarked on the same incident, while sharing his own experience of

transformation:

> …what she said and how she said it was an incredibly (for me) accurate depiction of the experience. So even all the questions you're asking me—I have some content in them, There was something else that happened—I'm back to where I started, but something shifted. It is the quality of the way this work is that something on a fairly deep level can be moved that can take time to be aware of or even be integrated, to hear her say that got, not just my marketing self, but that got another part of me to pay attention. At the end I had some—a really strong feeling about tenderness. About my experience of growing up with parents who were good people, but weren't very tender. Maybe the fear in the conference that it would be all fight and hate. Somehow, finding some place of tenderness seemed extremely important. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

At the same time, it may be difficult to hold on to that feeling over time, after returning

home:

> This is the interesting thing. Because after the conference I was on this high. I came to work and was telling my colleagues about it and I was feeling, my God, I thought this was so great. And it was like oh God, this is the kind of work I want to be doing—I was all fired up. Now I'm speaking to you and it's like two weeks, three weeks after the fact. And it was like, oh yeah, the conference—it was really good, hmmm. And I haven't really held on to the fire of inspiration. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

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> I don't know. I think…it's a hard question. There's not a lot of time to dwell on it for me…in that sense you have intense experiences and then you get plopped back in your life. You know there's movement, but then that's it. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

Learning from group relations conferences is cumulative. One of the major advantages of this approach is that participants from a wide range of backgrounds, experiences and knowledge can learn. It is possible to attend multiple conferences and to have completely different experiences, or to deepen learning about oneself, leadership, and authority. One participant, who served on staff of two other conferences in the few months prior to the conference remarked on the ways that these experiences "flow into each other and inform each other." This finding is consistent with group relations literature, and with unpublished research I have conducted at two prior group relations conferences since 2008. One of the advantages of the conference structure is that participants from a wide range of backgrounds, experience, and knowledge can have opportunities to learn. Because each conference is different (due to the different make-up of participants and different group dynamics), participants may attend multiple conferences, and continue to learn about themselves in role, leadership, and authority.

Learning about Leadership and Authority

Some of the personal learning reported by members was linked to the ways they take up (or don't take up) their own authority:

> I guess that there are several things I've been thinking about recently, and I think that in a way the conference brought several of them to the fore, issues that I struggle with around claiming my authority or specifically, just the patterns of behavior that I get into that somehow played itself out in the conference. In RAG group I realized I was doing something that I tend to do (outside of conference setting)... (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

> I think it was just using my gut with total comfort and not being afraid to take any risks at all. I just went with it. It gave me an incredible sense of self esteem

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> professionally. I felt very powerful. Don't usually feel that way in groups—that's
> not totally true--more powerful than I ever felt in a group. I think really being
> grounded in myself professionally, and feeling immense affection for the people
> there. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

One participant was able to look at some childhood experiences with authority figures in

a new light as a result of the conference. This revelation came after the conference.

Group relations conferences are designed to provide opportunities to learn about

groups, organizations, and larger social systems. Consultant interventions are aimed at

the group as a whole, rather than at individuals or interpersonal interactions. The model

purposely does not legislate what one should learn in any given conference. The

assumption is that participants will take up their own authority to set their own learning

goals and to take whatever learning they need from the conference. The primary concern,

theoretically and methodologically, is with the whole system and with the exercise of

leadership and authority (Hayden & Molenkamp, 2004; Miller, 1989; Wells, 1995). This

is one of the great strengths of group relations conference methodology: people of widely

different backgrounds and levels of experience can take from it highly personal and

individualized learning. Participants' responses to the survey questions were highly

variable in terms of what and how much was learned. This is also consistent with

anecdotal reports and my own research of previous conferences.

Role of the Diasporas

Several participants reported learning something about Diaspora. One reported

learning more about the role of the Diasporas in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict:

> One of my big learnings as well was something about the Diasporas claim to the
> region. Suddenly I felt that this isn't about just Israelis and Palestinians and I
> realized in the conference it's not. It is a much much much much wider thing…I
> was thinking about two things: one, that it's not just about Israelis and
> Palestinians. It's also about Christians—people, with Jerusalem being such a

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> religious place, that other people having some sort of claim to Jerusalem as well. Other people having a vested interest…I think there is something about keeping the conflict in the Middle East as it is. I think there is something about keeping it going as a way to have the fight between the Israelis and Palestinians on behalf of everyone else. Something like that. If there were no Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I don't know what would be for the Diaspora. So by the same token the Diaspora has a huge role in peacemaking or can play a large role in peacemaking. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

For most, the learning about Diaspora was personal, rather than political:

> On a personal level, it affected me in terms of my own understanding of Diaspora, it affected me a lot in that I started to pay attention to it more on a personal level more than, ok, groups of people migrate, and they are in Diaspora. So here I personally was enriching. Not only in my own experience as a person in Diaspora and understanding it better, exploring it. One way—it made so much sense—to be moved from one place to another place, and then to return to place of origin, it is not a returning, really, it is like going to a third place. So what moved, our reason to move, in a way. And that was a very interesting realization for me. That had sadness for me. and at the same time more humbling. also a humbling place. This move can have a developmental effect on me. In with development, you cannot go back to an previous stage… Another thing I found interesting was when (a conference member) talked about her relationship to the Diaspora, she felt odd. And I thought oh, that's another outcome that gets transmitted to you. There is an oddness to the experience of the Diaspora. I feel odd myself, and feel other people will see things about me that are odd. When I look around me I think, it makes sense that all of us who are there, feel some oddness about each one of us…So these personally, I felt enriched and better and deeper understanding of what it means to be in Diaspora and people who are in Diaspora, not just a group of people like Jews and blacks who are moved from one country to another country. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

After the conference, the Palestinian who experienced himself in the Diaspora despite

living in his homeland, made a decision to stay in Israel, rather than to emigrate:

> For me personally, it was very personal for me in the very last session of the conference when I cried and talked about the confiscation of my father's land. It was so personal. The other thing I think is, I took with me a lot of things to think about my personal issue of belonging—to whom I belong, to what I belong, and yes it is, there was a bit of affect on me. (I made a decision) that I don't want to be far away from my father. And it's very shitty here. But I cannot leave others to deal. I want to deal with them. I think my real main homeland is my relationship with my intimacy and others here. That is my real homeland. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

Participant Learning

At the same time, this participant missed the opportunity to understand the dynamics of

Diaspora on a more global level:

> I had a deep understanding on a personal level about the Diaspora experience. I think that what was not happening what was not occurring was the understanding of Diaspora in the large sense—in a group sense, in the very large group sense. The learning of the Diaspora issues. Diaspora was talked about a lot, in its very deep and intimate relatedness. But as a very personal one to each one. But I wanted to know more about that, about how it is netted and connected to the larger sphere. In the large group. about the dynamics of the Diaspora content and issues in large groups. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

Larger conferences, with more members of various Middle East and Jewish Diaspora

communities may provide greater opportunities to look at the theme of Diaspora on a

more global and systemic level.

Identity

An important area of learning for several conference participants was around the

theme of identity. One participant remarked that she was able to look at aspects of her

identity in a different way:

> Having a sense of re-visiting my Asian parts in a different way. Being more accepting of the Asian bits that go against the culture here…Feeling more like that's actually a part of something that goes beyond me. It's actually cultural and familial. So it brings me closer to that.

One became aware of how having multiple identities impacts his/her behavior:

> It's still not clear in my mind-something to do with my being in a situation, for example, having so many components to my identity, and not really making a choice about what I will commit to, so I sometimes stay out of things. I don't engage fully, because I don't know what parts of myself I can bring to it, so I don't really engage. (Conference member, immediate post-conference interview)

Three of the Jewish participants expressed ambivalence about elements of their Jewish

identity. This reflects some of the current splits within the American Jewish community.

As one remarked:

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> I think I am more tuned into my own internal conflict about my ambivalence about being Jewish and like I said, my increased awareness of a desire for place and home and kind of belonging, while at the same time being afraid of belonging, not unlike the way in which the theory is about people's ambivalence about joining groups. (Conference member, immediate post-conference interview)

Some had concerns about the kinds of projections they would attract because of their

identity:

> The ambivalence really had to do with my own feeling about being Jewish…one of my concerns, people were going to identify me about being Jewish, and it's not something I felt particularly very happy about. So how was I going to be in a place where I didn't particularly want to be...Would I feel my identity would be oversimplified, and I would hold all the projections. Which I knew ahead of time, but increasingly became aware of how implanted they are… (Conference member, immediate post-conference interview)

One was able to accept his Jewish-ness in a different way:

> I feel like I understand things around my own identity better—that I feel very connected to my Jewish-ness, without feeling like it needs to be more or less. It's a way of being ok with me defining my Jewish-ness. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

The presence of "others" (that is, non-Jews and non-Palestinians) was seen by some to be

crucial in understanding one's own identity:

> Microcosm—that it was a small sample or microcosm of people with very different experiences, and I think that it will be a reminder of the differences that aren't so apparent. I was also hearing about different people's experiences—…I think it was humbling in some ways, about the difficulties they've confronted that I've never had to confront. It's humbling, I learned from it, can see parts of myself in that, but in a different context. Helped me get in touch with some struggles, that I don't feel entitled to. Because there is some privilege. I can talk about my exile, but it is a more cultural exile, which is different from their experience, which is much more violent. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

> Actually, first of all, when there's others, not only Palestinians and Jews in this conference, how much it's helpful to be with others, like (conference participant) and other identities that were there, and that help others also to negotiate identities and the group and intergroup event. It was very meaningful in that. One specific learning, was that in this conference was that otherness is also needed in order to reach out my identities. That (the) other is needed. Actually to be in Diaspora is

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> not just Jews and Palestinians, also Palestinians and others—and others were
> there—… in any direction you want, it is very helpful and enriching experience
> and very framing the learning, it is a way that we want that to be with others, not
> only by national or other identity. Coming to this conference only Palestinians
> and Jews is not that helpful. Others (are) also needed to come for this conference.
> It is not only for Jews and Palestinians in the US. It is fascinating to see how
> others can play a very significant role. (Conference participant, immediate post-
> conference interview)

As noted in the literature review, group relations conferences in the US have been used to

explore themes of identity, including gender, race, and ethnicity (Braxton, et al., 2008;

McRae & Short, 2010). This study is consistent with previous research, which suggests

that this method can be a powerful way of exploring identity issues.

Learning about the Other

For some, the opportunity to be with people different from oneself was

meaningful. Participants did not necessarily change their attitudes or beliefs toward the

other, though it served as an important reminder:

> Well it increased my knowledge, no doubt, about dealing with others. If I disagree
> with others. Acceptance, even if they are different. I have that before, but it
> increase that. And increase also my giving, my toleration, give people more.
> (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

> I think just being able to get close to these issues, and get close to someone like
> (conference members) who I feel have such a different experience. I guess it was
> meaningful I wouldn't call them other, I guess there was a sense of "other", it was
> the opportunity to work with and be around people I would probably rarely
> interact with in that way in my day to day life. I have Palestinian friends who I've
> worked with them or whatever, but not in that way…I don't know if it's actually
> made a change in my attitudes and beliefs…I think maybe not…maybe because
> I've been around it a lot and thinking about all of this a lot so, it's not something
> new to me, thinking about this conflict. (Conference participant, immediate post-
> conference interview)

Participant Learning

Learning about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict

For participants who had no intimate knowledge of the Palestinian-Israeli

conflict or people involved, the conference provided a valuable opportunity to learn about

it:

> Wish I could say it brought peace and happiness to world, but maybe that would
> have been too grand…to have a different perspective on this. This is not the
> Israeli-Palestinian conflict to me anymore. I put people's faces to it now. I see
> these people's those who I was in this conference with when I think about this at
> that point. And I did not do that before I started this session on Friday. They
> weren't human beings—they were some *concept* of who an Israeli was, some
> *concept* of who a Palestinian was. And now they're people…It's made me
> understand how intractable this entire situation is. And has given me great
> empathy for the plight of the Palestinians, and how impossible their lives are, and
> really makes me wonder, makes me want to understand more about this conflict
> than I currently understand. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference
> interview)

> … I think I have more of a picture of a place that I've never been to—from the
> way people described it and their experiences there. It makes it almost like a place
> I am familiar with. I think that's pretty significant…I have images of going from
> Boston to Cambridge but having it look like it's a little more like it's in the
> Mideast—and having roadblocks along the bridge, along the way. So there's just
> these pictures of sun and lush ground, because (conference participant) said on the
> drive there that's what her home looks like. So trying to think about that, but with
> intense sun. And then market places…Just images. (Conference participant,
> immediate post-conference interview)

For those who came to the conference with more familiarity with the conflict, the

conference provided an opportunity to learn more about the Palestinian narrative. These

opportunities came through the presence of the Palestinian co-director and the Palestinian

member. Participants often remarked on the moment in the study group when the

Palestinian member spoke passionately about her experience:

> … I'm thinking, what justification do we as Jewish people have for treatment of
> Palestinians. I just felt that question that I asked myself on my trip (to Israel), and
> was voiced by (conference participant) was very cathartic for me. We're human
> beings. It was just very powerful for me. I was very happy because I hadn't heard

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> (conference member's) voice before that... (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

Participants learned and found the experience meaningful. At the same time, they hoped to have had (and to have in the future) the opportunity to learn more:

> …and being outside of Israel in Diaspora in the States, I felt that I heard more of (Palestinian participant's) voice. And I felt that I saw more of the pain…not that it changed my attitudes. I saw the pain of the situation being Palestinian Christian in Israel, and the loss around it. In that sense, that was something I didn't expect at all. My goal was to understand some of the dynamics, and I guess I did understand more. I think that I would have liked to have heard more from (Palestinian member) within the boundaries of the conference. We spoke a lot outside, but I would have liked to have learned more…I probably would have expected to hear more about that voice, not the voice which is Israeli Arab…or Palestinian within Israel. I would have liked to have heard more or understood more from someone in (Palestinian member's) role. I think it might have helped me learn more about mine or about some of the issues… (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

Because there were only two Palestinians in the conference (one director and one member), and the overall conference membership was small, conference participants had fewer opportunities to gain a more nuanced understanding of the conflict or of possibilities for peacemaking (such as the differences *within* each group). One Palestinian hoped to have (in future conferences) opportunities for intra-group work:

> I'm relying on what I experienced in this conference. I think something about the in-group—actually what I hold in mind for a long time—not just counting my experience in this specific conference. There is something about in-group conflicts that has to go deeper and be clarified. I think that if we had other Palestinians in the conference more than (conference member)—we would have opportunity to know more about that question and explore that more. But from the fragments in the conference …you can see how fragmented is the idea of Palestinian society—it is not that cohesed, and consolidated, meaning a lot of conflicts and a lot of domestic issues have to be done between Palestinians themselves. I think it is also an issue in the Palestinian Diaspora in the US— there's a lot of parties, a lot of Palestinians that are not in dialogue within themselves. And there's something about that that should be done. And I think groups like that, or conferences like that can be a very good and rich atmosphere for every group to do inside itself, to explore more about internal conflicts. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

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Had the conference membership been larger, the design would have included

opportunities to work within identity groups.

One Palestinian wanted the opportunity to speak with more Jews:

> Myself, honestly, I wish there are other people in the conference for me to act
> more and face more— I wish there are other people—more Jewish people.
> Because these people I need them to listen to me. I like other people, but I like
> Jews to be in conference like that. Since this touch Palestinian Israeli conflict,
> needs to be like that. (I'd) like to see more religious people, not just Jewish, but
> also Muslim. Would like to see more…Mizrahi, more Arab Jews. I'm just
> searching, what's wrong in their mind? I have a lot of questions I need to have
> answered. These people can answer me, if they can. Or we can help each other to
> answer…Why they treat me like that. Like (conference participant), I told him?—
> why do you want to kick me out? Why I pay the price of Holocaust? I'm not
> responsible of that but they make me I am responsible for this. Are they aware of
> what they doing there? I don't believe that they don't have feeling. I don't believe
> that they don't thinking of what's going on…But what's going on with them with
> what they do in the West Bank and in Gaza. So I look to mirror these things, to
> understand. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

The low membership had different impact on participant learning. For some, it meant that

it would be impossible to hide or be anonymous:

> I was nervous. As the day approached, I thought I'm gonna spend the whole
> weekend with, I don't know however many strangers, who I didn't know. So I did
> have a bit of apprehension… when I read the brochure, it said limited to 50. I
> thought great! Fifty people—I can hide. Then when you and I emailed you and
> said how many people will be there and you said 10-15, and I thought oh my god!
> So I thought oh God, you really can't hide. You really have to be in there. But I
> think it worked out fine with the number of people you had. I'd be curious to do
> another one with a larger amount of people to compare what the experience is
> like. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

One participant felt that the intimacy of the conference made it possible to get a more

nuanced version of the conflict:

> The thing that really struck me was that in some ways, with the small number, I
> hadn't thought of it in comparison with conferences with more members. it was
> almost like everybody had to hold a piece of what it was. That everybody had the
> opportunity to really show up. I guess it's sort of like the dynamic of the small
> group vs. the large group, so everybody's identity., Everybody had a leading role

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> in the process. No one could hide, in a way that sometimes happens if you have more people. So the complexity of Everyone's identity was very much a part of what we were looking at. It wasn't just that the Jews are over here, and the Palestinians are over there and the Christians are there. It was sort of like Every individual person had differentiating qualities that were very apparent…it sort of checked the tendency to over simplify the conflict, or to characterize a group of people in one particular…as being the same. It made it into a much more personal dialogue rather than political dialogue about sort of two different abstract positions. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

One participant found that the intimacy of the conference was containing:

> … But I think I expected it to be more difficult, and I think maybe it was size, or maybe it was contained. I don't think it was less rich because of it. I just think that there was something that was containing, and maybe that was a positive thing. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

The intensity of the conference, with participants living and working together over three days, provided a context in which learning could happen. Moments that provided participants with the opportunity to see the "other" differently than expected, often happened during break times between sessions. Tight boundaries around time, territory and the conference task provided containment for potentially explosive feelings. By not actively facilitating or setting an agenda, the staff provided a space for participants to take up their own authority. Participants in the study were clear in speaking to the importance of the staff in containing the potentially explosive feelings of the conference.

Group Relations Learning

For conference participants experienced in group relations work, this conference represented a new application of the method, and offered new possibilities for the work of group relations:

> I think one thing is that making a political topic around a group relations conference is really a good idea. It has a lot of merit. It feels more applicable…so for instance, who knows if I've changed, but I have a feeling about a place

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> now…about a place that has a lot of meaning for people. I don't know—that
> seems different. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

At the same time, some were anxious to see how and whether group relations methods

could be integrated into the conference theme. Group relations offered a way to link the

personal with the political:

> …Well I, although I can't say I feel that much more, what's the word…I can't say
> that my opinion about Israel and what Israel is doing has shifted. I definitely, it
> sort of opened some possibilities in my mind about how group relations work can
> be used…This is important work and I believe in it. The relationship between the
> personal and the political—it just comes back to me that the folly of looking at
> politics without going pretty deep into the personal. And then thinking, ok, how
> does that actually apply, other than getting everybody in Middle East to do
> personal work in various ways… In some ways it's optimistic, and in some ways
> it's pessimistic. Are people involved in these huge global conflicts in a position,
> willing or interested or even capable of looking at the personal element to some
> degree? (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

Historically, US based group relations organizations have been ambivalent at best

about using conference methods to understand and intervene in larger societal problems

(Fraher, 2004a). At its founding, the Tavistock Institute functioned as a social science

research organization focused on the "study and amelioration of wider social problems in

family, industry and community" (Fraher, 2004a, p. 125). In this way, it is considered

among the first to engage in action research.

For the conference co-director, who had been skeptical from the beginning, the

conference was a revelation:

> …From moment it started it felt to me like we were working with issues around
> the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the role of the Diasporas. It felt like it was a
> Diaspora conference done in group relations way…I think I am quite inspired by
> what we did, and I was not expecting to be inspired by what we did… You came
> to us with the title, so, I never really spent a lot of time thinking about the word
> until we got to the conference. I spent a lot of time thinking about conflict
> resolution, and now I feel like those are radically different things. It was
> constructed in my head as group relations applied to conflict resolution. Seeing it
> as group relations applied to peacemaking is very inspiring and I see all sorts

> potential and future for it…if I think of peacemaking, if I flip the words around a little bit—it's about making peace with things—and the things we have to make peace with, within ourselves, in our context, about other people. I learned whole lot about peacemaking if you define it that way. I believe that the Arab-Israeli conflict—the only way to resolve that conflict is through peacemaking, is through a whole lot of people making peace within themselves, and with the other and to be clear about who the other is they need to make peace with. All that stuff is very much alive in me. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

As noted in the previous chapter, one conference participant, who came with no prior group relations experience questioned to what degree the more experienced members were importing issues that weren't necessarily present in the conference. This was in line with some of my observations during the conference:

> The knowledge was in a sense not knowledge, it was a knowledge of what to expect. That led to a re-enactment…I talked about feeling ripped off from having the experience of being thrown in with bunch of newbies. So the reenactment is based on that expectation, that this is what's going to happen, so we know how to do this. But they didn't know what was going to happen, except they made a certain thing happen, by doing it. Who knows what may have happened otherwise…They jumped quickly into free association process with a certain set of assumptions that I think were shared by the management team…That has to do with the psychoanalytic basis of the work. I talked earlier about the omission of Eros. That is actually the flip side of this. This is about the over valorizing of Thanatos. There was an expectation of conflict and aggression and hostility and all that kind of stuff, and an assumption of it, of its presence in the room and in the consciousness of members of the group and in the collective consciousness of the group. The problem is not that it wasn't there, the problem is that it was identified on the basis of the assumption and the expectation rather than on perceiving it happening. One way that happened is by someone saying something like, I'm sensing the presence of aggression in the room, without identifying any locus or source or way that they're sensing it. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

This speaks to one of the limitations of group relations work, which will be discussed further in the next chapter. The intensity of group relations conference experiences is very appealing to some. Members who come to conferences multiple times may consciously or unconsciously re-create previous conference experiences by importing dynamics from previous conferences.

Participant Learning

Peacemaking/universality of human condition

One participant remarked on a greater sense of humanity after the conference:

> What I got out of the experience was. ..What I can say is, that universality of human condition. That diverse way of relating to Diaspora, like how (conference participant) talked about how he got there, and the way he got there and (conference participant), how he feels he lives in Diaspora, though in his homeland. All these people, I get to see them in same place of human, so that's what I get from—more humanness—more human as I am a part of them and they are a part of me. I think that brings peace. When people think, I am part of them and they are part of me. So, I got peace out of it too. (Conference participant, immediate post-conference interview)

Three Month Follow-Up

Responses to questions on the three month follow-up survey are noted in table 5. As with the evaluations administered immediately post conference, there was a wide range of responses to Likert questions regarding:

- How much participants learned about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the role of the Diasporas

- Personal and professional impact of the conference

- The impact of the conference on attitudes/feelings about and participation in activities with their own and the other identity groups.

Participant Learning

Table 5: Three-Month Follow-Up Survey Responses

Question	1	2	3	4	5	N/A or don't know	Mean
To what extent have you been in touch with other conference participants?	50% (4)	25% (2)	25% (2)	0	0	0	1.75
To what extent has participation in the conference affected you personally?	12.5% (1)	12.5% (1)	37.5% (3)	25% (2)	12.5% (1)	0	3.13
To what extent has participation in the conference affected you professionally?	25% (2)	0	37.5% (3)	25% (2)	12.5% (1)	0	3.00
How would you rate your learning in the following areas?							
How I take up authority and leadership	0	0	50% (4)	37.5% (3)	12.5% (1)	0	3.63
Understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict	25% (2)	12.5% (1)	25% (2)	37.5% (3)	0	0	2.75
How the conflict impacts on me emotionally	12.5% (1)	12.5% (1)	37.5% (3)	25% (2)	12.5% (1)		3.13
Covert or unconscious processes in group and in the conflict	0	12.5% (1)	12.5% (1)	62.5% (5)	12.5% (1)	0	3.75
Identity issues	25% (2)	0	0	62.5% (5)	12.5% (1)	0	3.38
Understanding the role of the Diasporas in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict	25% (2)	12.5% (1)	50% (4)	12.5% (1)	0	0	2.50
Other	12.5% (1)	0	12.5% (1)	0	25% (2)	50% (4)	3.50
To what extent has participation in the conference affected your involvement toward your own community/identity group?	37.5% (3)	12.5% (1)	37.5% (3)	12.5% (1)	0	0	2.25
To what extent has participation in the conference affected your involvement with the other community/identity group?	37.5% (3)	25% (2)	12.5% (1)	25% (2)	0	0	2.25
To what extent has participation in the conference affected your attitudes/feelings towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?	25% (2)	12.5% (1)	25% (2)	37.5% (3)	0	0	2.75
To what extent has participation in the conference affected your involvement with activities related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?	25% (2)	25% (2)	25% (2)	25% (2)	0	0	2.50
How likely are you to recommend this conference to others?	0	25% (2)	25% (2)	0	50% (4)	0	3.75
N=15							

1= very little or none/ I would never recommend this conference to anyone
2= a little/ I might recommend this conference, but very selectively
3= some/ I can think of one or two people that I would definitely recommend it to
4= a great deal/ I can think of several people who would enjoy this kind of conference
5= a very great deal/ I would recommend this conference without hesitation

Participant Learning

After three months, there was some overlap of learning themes from the first interviews. However, for most participants, conference learning evolved over time. The research intervention may also have played some role in the evolution of participant learning, providing an opportunity for participants to reflect further on the experience, and to keep it in mind. A few participants specifically commented on the ways in which the interviews helped them to further reflect on and learn from their conference experience:

> I think the phone calls are helpful, because it kind of gets you back there—gets it on the radar. If you weren't calling me and asking me, off it goes. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

For some, learning that had previously been in the foreground (aspects of personal learning in particular) now receded further to the background and vice versa.

> What remains for me about the conference is the Palestinian-Israeli Diaspora stuff, as opposed to traditional group relations authority relations stuff. What seems to have got smaller is usual group relations stuff. The theme of the conference remained with me…(Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

One participant, who had described a powerful personal learning related to childhood experience during the first interview, could not remember what it was by the second interview.

> I'm a little surprised, but not very, and a little disappointed, in how much it faded for me now--that I didn't know before this interview. Especially that aftermath stuff that was so powerful for me. The way that relates to your question is that I wish I continued to experience more of a lasting effect from it. And again, I knew right this away, it was only one experience and it was only a few days, and only a handful of people, and a lot left to be mined there in that sort of process for me. It's not like I feel I failed in some way, or that the process failed in some way. It was just the first in that kind of experience.

Despite the disappointment, this participant would "absolutely" attend the conference again:

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> The disappointment is my motivation. the disappointment is that I went in really hungry to get a good chunk of learning of a new thing that I could kind of see the contours of from reading about it and hearing from you a little about it. It looked really interesting and valuable and intriguing and mysterious. Coming out of it, it feels just about as mysterious as it did going in. maybe at least one new mystery. And I just feel like I got the barest little base of exposure to that juicy looking stuff that looked like it might be there. I could imagine, with more experience, that if I have enough more experience, the result will be that I'll conclude that there wasn't really anything that interesting there that I thought there might be. That could happen. But right now, looks like there's a whole unstudied discipline there that's of interest to me. And that's what my disappointment is --that I only got to audit one class. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

Table 6 below notes the learning themes for participants at three months post

conference, compared to immediately after the conference.

Table 6

Participant Learning (Themes)	N (immediately post conference)	N (three months post conference)
Personal Learning (greater confidence, greater courage, more "grounded," different view of childhood experience)	8	4
Identity	5	1
Diaspora	5	3
Israeli-Palestinian Conflict	5	4
Leadership and Authority	4	1
Group Relations (how it can be used for peacemaking/conflict resolution/other applications)	4	1
Personal is Political	2	1
The Role of "Others" (in learning about personal identity)	2	
Learning about the "other" and personal bias	2	6
Gender	0	1

Learning about the Other and Personal Bias

Learning about the other and one's own biases came to the forefront of several

participants' minds at the three month mark:

Participant Learning

> I think it makes me a little more sensitive, I suppose, to the experience of an identity group that is not mine. I think there's something about it becoming personalized, rather than just theoretical, knowing that their experience in life is difficult. Something about meeting with people and actually working with them personalized it a bit more. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

However, this learning was not the same for all. For one, it was about seeing the other in

a more differentiated way:

> … I've always felt extremely more sensitive to Palestinians living in Israel—or Arabs living in Israel. I have to say, the one thing there's been this weird shift around—I've been much more polarized in my view about Jews in Israel. I think I'm differentiating--there's more gray area in relation to Palestinians than there is around Jews. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

For a Muslim, it was about learning more about the conflict from the perspective of

religious Jews:

> But meeting (an Orthodox Jew) and we had discussion from this conflict especially from religion perspective. For me, the way how some religious people think—it really made me think about it. Especially when he talk about Jerusalem—it's only for particular people. I look to when I talk to him, but also, for Muslims, it is mentioned in Koran. It is also in Torah. Also in Koran. So we have boxes. So who's right who's wrong?
> …Maybe we need to think about the boxes, the Holy books…And people need to address these things. Why they afraid. Let's talk about it. Ok, I believe it's in your Torah. You need to believe me… so I think people shouldn't hold things inside, they need to talk about it. It was interesting I think. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

For one, the learning was about personal bias towards the other:

> I got out of it something I wanted—, which was to understand my own bigotry— and I think that's what came out with (conference participant). I think it's connected to a lack of empathy in some ways, a judgmentalism. I understood it. I've always sort of understood it when it's happened to me, but I wanted to see if it would come out with someone different from me. It came out because he's an observant Jew—with the clothes and the beard. It's sort of like the reaction a lot of westerners have to women wear the head covering. "what is that, why do they have to dress like that, they're in the United States." And I was saying, why are you so loud, why do you have to pray so loud, why do you need the candles… (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

Participant Learning

The conference allowed one participant to be with others in a different way, beyond the

conference:

> And I have a chance to speak more with people who are from other very faraway
> places. I'm more apt to want to give more room to know more room for all the
> things about them, that I don't know, that all my intuition, my guessing, my
> instinct would not really be telling me. In a sense, being less sure of myself is
> actually a good thing. Cause I really don't know. And I'm ok with that, I might
> add. Probably another time in my life that I would not have been ok with
> that…I'm probably more aware of gray right now than I was before the
> conference. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

This finding is consistent with research suggesting that inter-group encounters (based on

the contact hypothesis) can result in prejudice reduction (Hurtado, 2005; Khuri, 2004;

Maoz, 2003; Biren A. Nagda, 2006; Biran A. Nagda, et al., 2004; Biren A. Nagda, et al.,

2006; Biren A. Nagda & Zuniga, 2003; Tausch, et al., 2006).

Learning about the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Several participants reported greater awareness of and curiosity about the Israeli-

Palestinian conflict than they had prior to the conference. Their greater interest

manifested in paying closer attention to news stories related to the conflict, as well as

having conversations about the conflict with others.

> I think I feel more involved in the issue…but my attentiveness to the Middle East
> conflict was heightened and my personal connection to it is much stronger…What
> I would amplify is being more comfortable and competent with the issue. I think
> that's the thing that stands out for me the most. I usually don't spend a lot of time
> talking about issues like the Middle East conflict, but I have been over the last
> few months… the first thing, is that I've been more attentive to it. What that
> means is literally looking for it more in the paper, and when an article comes
> along… I'll read the article. (Conference member, three month follow-up
> interview)

> And in fact, in some ways it sort of heightened my noticing certain things, when
> articles are published in particular about what the nature of the Jewish community
> is in the Diaspora, is it increasingly polarized or is the Orthodox community
> taking control. Or even the issue that is going on in Israel right now between who
> defines conversions, all those issues. I'm definitely noticing that more or

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> imagining the conversations more in my mind as a result of the conference
> experience…In some ways I feel like I had more of a peek of how it must feel like
> to be in Israel in the midst of these conversations. Up until then I felt like a
> complete outsider that had all these opinions that weren't based on very much
> experience in some ways—they were just my bias about certain things. In some
> way I feel more of a direct experience even though it still seems quite distanced
> from the actual place. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

For some, it was meaningful to be able to connect news about the conflict with

individuals they met at the conference:

> It certainly makes me more curious when I hear something on the radio, or when I
> read something in the paper. I think it's like anything when you have a personal
> human connection to something. I probably have met in my life Palestinians. I
> certainly have met in my life Israelis. But I don't really remember having met
> them. Now Palestinians have a face for me. Now they have a voice for me. I see
> this woman standing in front of me. I see a rabbi standing in front of me. I can
> picture him, I can picture an Israeli…I can picture theses people in front of me.
> And in some sense, it becomes more personal. It's not something so ambiguous.
> Palestinians, Israelis. Until you meet one. And then Israelis breathe speak and talk
> and are thoughtful, etc. etc. In that sense it's had a lasting impression on me.
> Even though I forget most of their names, I might add. There's a lot of that. I
> don't know. I don't know why. By and large I don't remember the names of most
> of the people who were there[117]. But in my mind's eye, I can still see their faces,
> hear their voices, I can, even as I'm speaking to you now, see them moving or
> most often, sitting around in the circle of the study group. So they're nonetheless
> real. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

> Greater attention to and awareness of the conflict has not necessarily resulted in a

change of attitude or understanding about the conflict:

> I think mainly when I read stuff in the newspapers, about a different kind of
> experience. I think about it in relation to the particular people I've met. Or when
> I'm walking down the street-- I've been spending all this time in East Jerusalem,
> and somehow I think about peacemaking more, I think about Diaspora
> communities outside of Israel or outside of Palestine…I don't know that it's
> changed my understanding…I think my attitude globally, intellectually, I still
> have similar attitudes. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

Though not all of the participants were part of Jewish or Middle Eastern Diaspora

communities or even very familiar with the conflict, the conference nevertheless became

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[117] Curiously, five participants had difficulty remembering the names of conference members.

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a microcosm of the larger socio-political system. By studying the microcosm in the here

and now, participants learned about the dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Being able to connect news stories with individuals they had met at the conference was

an important aspect of this learning.

The Role of the Diasporas

Immediately after the conference, participants discussed their learning about

Diaspora on a personal level. At three month follow-up, Diaspora issues were discussed

at a more systemic or global level.

> It all sort of coalesces these days around the word Diaspora, and it coalesces for
> me around the number of people in the conference, who were so personally and
> immediately affected by it. I do come away with it, I have to remind myself that it
> is so prevalent in this world, because it doesn't really touch my world on a daily
> basis. That's why I'm so glad I'm involved in this other project that's forcing me
> to think about it more often, than I have before. Conference life is so immediate
> and it's so real and so dynamic in the moment. Then we go back to the safety and
> protection and sameness of our lives, that it's not as prevalent. For me, it's not in
> the front of my mind. I always think about the conference whenever I'm at this
> particular corporate site, which is about 2-3 days every other week, and we talk
> about this stuff… And I never talked about it before the conference, and in fact I
> didn't even know how to pronounce it. (Conference member, three month follow-
> up interview)

The Palestinian co-director, who had mediated the conflict between the Jewish co-

director and I was pre-occupied with the Jewish Diaspora in the US:

> Of the issues of Diaspora. Something must be continued afterwards. What pops
> into my mind immediately, a little bit of, I'll say this, of worries about what's
> going on inside the states…I think there's something happening inside the Jewish
> Diaspora in the States, but I'm not sure what's really happening, but I'm sure
> there is some change taking place. Implicitly I can think there's something
> changing, but explicitly I cannot describe it. I think something is moving, but I'm
> not sure what direction it is moving. (Conference member, three month follow-up
> interview)

> This raises the question of whether a conference specifically focused on the

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Jewish Diaspora or Jewish Diaspora organizations might be useful. Such a conference

would provide an opportunity to explore conflicts within the Jewish American

communities. At the same time, heterogeneous conferences can foster greater awareness

of intra-group issues through the presence of an "other." This was discussed earlier in this

chapter. Heterogeneous conferences could provide the opportunity for both intra-group

as well as inter-group work while addressing some of the issues discussed in the literature

regarding the power asymmetries between the groups (Halabi, 2004; Halabi &

Sonnenschein, 2004; Maoz, 2004, 2006).

Leadership and Authority

While four people discussed learning about leadership and authority in the first

interview, only two did so in the second interview. A few more mentioned it as an area of

learning in the surveys:

> Anything that comes from me they will take in a different way, so I need to be
> extremely careful. Because misunderstanding, judgment different way, so I also
> need to be in right way, when I lead, when I talk. When I appear or represent
> myself. I need to be really strong, not weak, as in the reality how people look to
> me. I'm not…I'm not…, I'm weak. which is true, in reality it's true. So therefore i
> don't want that. So I try to gather myself to understand all the game. So therefore
> I take time. Compared to others…Even inside I was really not comfortable with
> that. But this is destiny, this is the reality, I need to be patient with that…
> …it opened my eyes to understand what's going on, with different role. When
> you be in role as president, when you be in role as volunteer, when you be in role
> as instructor… as director. I can tell that, how switching role, where is the power,
> and where are you from that. In the conference also, how we take it… when you
> get power, you feel more relaxed, and you feel really, more comfortable, and you
> can. For me, it can be …more relaxed. But I think on some level you lose your
> fighting. Sometimes it's better to have less power because you stand up and hear
> what's going on, and you become a good fighter. But since I am a good fighter for
> a long time. Now it's time for me to relax and have power. I have been fighting
> for a long long while. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

As previously noted, those with prior group relations experience had greater learning

about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, whereas those with more knowledge about the

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conflict reported greater learning about leadership and authority, the traditional emphasis

of group relations conferences.

Applications of Conference Learning

While the conference raised awareness about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, this

awareness did not necessarily translate directly into action:

> … it hasn't made me want to give up a work assignment to go and do relief work, or to be more personally involved. But I am more personally aware. And maybe that's the progression of things, from awareness to action. It will be interesting as we continue to do these things. And also kind of interesting that as we talk about it, it reminds me of it and these touch points along the way may be springboards to doing something that I hadn't thought of doing. I've never been to Israel, though I have on a couple of occasions in these last three months wondered what it would be like to go there. And I've never had that thought before. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

This has been one of the challenges of inter-group work documented in the conflict

resolution literature. While these kinds of interventions may be effective in changing

personal bias, these changes do not necessarily carry over to the societal level (Tausch, et

al., 2006). It remains to be seen whether a re-structuring of the event (to be described

further in the next chapter) may result in greater societal impact over time.

One conference member did become more politically active following the conference:

> I mean it disturbed something in myself. I don't want to be the kind of person who doesn't say the kind of thing I need to say when I need to say it. Especially when it comes to my rights. I can always fight for the rights of others. But I have to fight for the rights of myself as well. And that includes if so is doing a lot of harsh judging in my presence—whether it be of me or another person. I have to say, I don't like that. What else am I going to do about it? I don't know, working on campaign, standing up for what I want. Following through on doing whatever I committed myself to do…I found myself saying it very early on in conference I get depressed when I hear about Israel-Palestine and how they're destroying themselves. How Israel is destroying self and Palestine. Such a helpless depressed experience just watching it. So, what can I do about it? I can join Jewish Voice for Peace even though I'm not a Jew—and try to keep electing American congress people who have ethics, who can support the rest of government to do what it needs to do. Keep writing letters to the white house and my senators, and tell

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them what I think. That includes Israel. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

One member decided to renew her clinical credentials as a result of the conference.

Another was considering getting more involved in peace or dialogue work, but had not

yet found a way to do so:

Not yet, but keep thinking that I would like to do something more, and I haven't actually done anything. So it hasn't actually translated into my changing my activities. (I'm) not sure (about the type of activity I want to do), but, some sort of dialogue groups, getting involved in something more or volunteering to work. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

One member became much more aware of gender dynamics and has been able to

apply that learning to her organizational work:

I observe that how much gender really affect things—especially with women. I look to my organization, how the men try to dominate and control. So, I do not allow that. And I observe it very fast… because the conference opened my eyes about the gender stuff. I had that before, but it opened my eyes more…How much women… she tries to lead that men really get threatened and try to take control. I noticed that-- in a deep way. Before I maybe not take it like that. But today, no. I feel it now. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

One member was determined to continue the emotional work of bringing people

in conflict together:

It reminds me that things happen that are necessary. We still have a long way to go. That we are few—those who are interested in peace are few. .. I'm more patient, more humble, more determined too, in working on forgiveness and reconciliation at the same time. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

Participant Recommendations

Participants had several recommendations for the conference. These are noted

below, and will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Participant Learning

Recruitment

While conference participants found the conference to be a rich learning

experience, all suggested that future conferences would benefit with a greater number of

participants:

> I didn't feel that at the end (of the conference), but looking back I do wish it could
> have been larger. It's about recruitment. Not sure what can be done differently to
> make that happen…It felt like it was very powerful and I felt that the experience
> was very rich as it was. Looking back, I wish it had reached more people, I think
> it may have been richer if there had been more people. Maybe at the time also, I
> was with other kinds of learning, more traditional group relations stuff. Now what
> stays with me is learning about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I think that could
> have been more interesting if there were more people to work with around that.
> (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

> I'm not sure it would be that different, I think the difference would be in terms of
> more positions, more energy, more complexity, as more and more people added. I
> think part of what this showed me the complexity of this particular conversation,
> and in some ways we had 30-40 members, I was sort of anxious about the
> dynamics before it went for a lot of reasons. I think I feel more confident about
> being able to manage the dynamics if there were 30 or 40 people, sort of multiple
> positions in the conflict… It would put me in a better position to say exactly what
> it is that people would be coming to. (Conference member, three month follow-up
> interview)

A conference co-director felt that we had made a fundamental error by not explicitly

including (non-Arab) Christians in the conference task and brochure:

> There's a way in which we were heavily replicating that by framing this
> conference around the Arab-Israeli Diaspora community. And leaving out
> Christians—I was thinking of that in terms of the replication of the space, the
> crosses everywhere, maybe it was a way of the space telling us what we weren't
> doing. Because the land of Israel/ Palestine is the land of, the roots of where the
> Christian Diaspora came from too. This conflict is heavily heavily dominated,
> influenced, directed, propagated by the western Christian world. (Conference co-
> director, three month follow-up interview)

Convene Conferences on Regular Basis

Most participants also suggested that these conferences should be convened on a

regular basis, from every few months to every year. As one member remarked:

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> Kind of like a longitudinal study, but longitudinal conferences where dynamic
> themes that cannot be answered in a 3,5,7,14 day period of time, but really need a
> sustained effort, could be explored. It would also be really interesting to see how
> any of us would have changed in relationship to each other over a year or two.
> What would that dynamic be like, and how would that translate on an
> interpersonal level? Is it simply that we need to be filled with more facts figures,
> stories, and statistics about our lives, and the worlds we come from and the
> cultures we come from, or is it that we need more interaction with each other?
> What is change, or lasting change? How does it really occur? Where do we gain
> that true profound, deep, understanding that lingers and stays with us?
> (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

Provide More Free Time

Two participants suggested that the conference be longer, but with more free time

during the days to reflect, and for observant Muslims and Jews, to pray. As one stated:

> For me, what works better is to have more days, and have each day be a little bit
> less jam packed…And for me that was a problem. That set me up there. There are
> a million things that can set people up in that kind of situation. And that's grist for
> the mill. So, it wasn't terrible. But it would certainly be smoother for me, if I
> were able to do what I needed to do better without disrupting my own
> participation in the conference…but my schedule is free enough that I can give it
> extra days, and (that's) not true for most people. (Conference member, three
> month follow-up interview)
> Let people relax. I don't find any relaxation in the conference. I recommend it
> very highly. When you give people a break, they bring in more energetic, and get
> more with themselves. I don't know if this is purpose of the conference to keep
> people under pressure. But even in reality, people have also relaxation. So it's
> good to have in the conference, a couple of hours or one day, or ½ day, it's just
> for relaxation. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

One participant missed the intimacy present in other experiential workshops attended,

and suggested more time and/or a change of structure to remedy that:

> It's going to take more than two days to get to know people. That was my
> impression, with this particular process. That's the effect it had on me. It made
> me feel a little sad. If I compare it to a psychodynamic institute, where at the end
> of two days, you know people in a different way. I don't know whether it's
> because it's about conflict and authority, or the way it is structured. The boundary
> between the management and the participants is very artificial. It's clear that they
> are the ones in authority. But because there are all these structures, I think it
> breaks the intimacy… There is something in the structure for me that impeded the
> intimacy. I'm not sure now if it was because the staff were made into participants.

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> I remember the other group relations conference I was at. I felt a lot of attachment to the other participants. This felt much less—I felt much less attached to the other participants. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

It should be noted that generally speaking, the primary task of group relations conferences is not to foster intimacy, but rather to learn about the exercise of leadership and authority in groups. The conference structure and behavior of consultants reflects this, and can provoke anxiety or even rage. In my research and personal experiences in over twenty years of conference attendance in member and staff roles, the capacity to provoke anxiety and rage is not necessarily accompanied by the capacity to explore and work through these intense emotions. This seems to be an area where group relations practice could be improved[118]. This is also related to the following suggestion of a conference participant.

More Clarity about Conference Tasks

One participant, who had no previous group relations conference experience thought that some of the conference tasks might be presented with more clarity:

> I wanted to have more clarity. For me I kind of lost it a little bit when we broke up into groups (during the IE). Because I wasn't clear what was happening. Because then it became, ok, we have to do a project. And for some reason, I had lost the thread, maybe because it was kind of an overwhelming process to begin with… then I was like, whoa whoa whoa what are we doing here now? I was just a little confused. I got it eventually. I guess moving into that mode. Even if it was something that was made clear from the beginning, I for whatever reason lost it. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

Greater Clarity about Conference Purpose/Objectives

One participant suggested that the purpose of the conference should be made clearer:

> I like group relations conferences. I think they are intense. Because they deal with unconscious, they can do a lot of good work. But I think they need to have a

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[118] Yvonne Agazarian (1988) suggests interesting and effective ways to work with powerful affect in groups focused on deep exploration, rather than avoidance of the feelings.

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> reason. I believe in this process. I believe the work, but, what is the objective of the conference? (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

This same participant also suggested expanding the focus of the conference to immigrant populations in the US:

> Have it be for immigrant populations—immigrants and Americans. Rather than have it be the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it's got to be immigrants and the conflict that they evoke in American society. Cause I think it's happening right here. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

One of the conference co-directors pondered why there was such low attendance, when other (non-experiential) conferences convened in the area were filled to capacity (one with over 200 people)[119], and suggested the need to "politicize" the conference:

> Why the experiential part of it is somehow not attended. People prefer to come to conferences and just to talk and to debate and not be in the full experience of these things. I'm thinking about that. I'm not sure what stands behind it, but I still keep thinking about that. Maybe I'm just jumping to answer other questions. But I'm quite sure that if we, somehow we need to politicize the group relations experiences. I mean by that, it must be done, that we can show this kind of work to political parties, to political leaders, not to just keep this clear, intermediate way of being in conferences. We have to bring this conference into the awareness of others. Even into the political territories. (Conference co-director, three month follow-up interview)

The second conference director proposed that the next conference be constructed as an organizational intervention for five to seven organizations at once, where each might send five or more of their leaders to the conference.

Pre-Conference Staff Work

One member suggested that more than other group relations conferences, this type of conference requires greater preparation on the part of the staff.

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[119] He was referring to a conference convened at University of Massachusetts Boston for two days in 2009. The conference was academic and consisted of presentations over the course of the weekend, and was attended by over 200 participants—academics and activists. It should be noted that this conference was also free of charge.

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> Well the first thing that strikes me is the adaptation that we made in terms of members and staff, in some ways realizing the kind of preparatory work that a staff needs to do for a conference that has this kind of content is different than for a traditional conference…the capacity to hold the space and do interpretations to some degree is based on the ability to be a little bit out of the dynamic… my identity issues showed up differently in this than they would normally do in a conference, because it was so much about Jewish identity and my ambivalence and my own struggles and my politics about that…which I don't find to be so front and center in other conferences, even though those identity issues come up. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

It may be that this particular conference served the purpose of preparing staff to do a different type of conference work. The positive experiences of participants may also serve to reduce organizational resistance (in group relations organizations) to this kind of application of group relations methods.

Recruitment

Following the conference, I interviewed two Palestinian activists and educators (in May and June 2010 respectively), in order to ascertain what might be some of the underlying issues for the low attendance at this conference. Both activists had experience over many years organizing, convening and participating in educational events (regarding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict), including inter-group (Jewish-Palestinian) dialogue groups, and were well connected in the Palestinian community. I initially contacted them a few years ago about the project, and met with one periodically over time, and with the other again prior to the conference. Both had been supportive of my efforts and suggested other contacts within the Palestinian community. I had invited both of them to the conference, though neither was able to attend. I asked each of them about their experience organizing, convening, or participating in intergroup (Jewish-Arab-Palestinian) events and the challenges of that. I also asked them to share with me their reservations about this conference, and their thoughts about what might make attendance

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at this conference more attractive to them and/or other Palestinians. One issue that came

up for each of them was the pain of participating in inter-group efforts:

> I'll try to articulate this correctly. For one, just thinking of me personally—when you first talked to me, four days feels like a lot of time and a very intensive situation. For me it's very painful, the reality of what's happening. It's not just political thing that I engage with—because this is something that is more part of my core. Other people might be more able to…so for me, I was   hesitant to put myself in a situation that is painful –it goes on for a long time. If it's an hour or two or whatever, then, maybe it's more realistic. But then for me to be in lock down for like a day or two and come out of it and still be in pain…
> I think the political space has changed a lot now. But when people disbelieve or question things that are about who you are and are very basic about your narrative, your identity, then it becomes really hard to do anything beyond that. So I think, you know…since then, I've done different things and changed…but I think I was fearful of that. Fearful of my narrative being denied. Me having to prove myself over and over again and coming out with nothing as a result. So I think, that's painful. I have had some interesting experiences where I've had opportunities to engage and they've been rewarding. So I have to say, it hasn't all been negative…but not knowing what, and it's the length of time, it was like, how much can I do this for? (Palestinian activist, June 2009)

The second activist described her experience in a Jewish-Arab dialogue group several

years ago:

> … there was a lot of pressure on me as representing the Palestinians. And in that retreat, we're going back and forth with the usual arguments of the Holocaust justifies everything, and the Arabs don't like the Palestinians, they're also …the usual thing, and at some point (another member of the group) lost his temper, banging on the table, and he said, "you're right. We are strong, you are weak. We win, you lose." And I said thank you, now we can talk. For me, up until that point, it was bullshit. Now we can talk—yeah, you are strong, we are weak, you won the war, we lost it. Now let's talk. How do we move from here? At that point, my request for withdrawal from the discussion groups was approved. I had requested to be released from the discussions, and I said, they're bad for me—they're just bad for my sense of health, for my heart, for my mind. Every time I go home from these discussion groups I need two days to recover. I feel violated all over again. I'm re-living my traumas all over again. (Palestinian activist, May 2009)

These responses reflect one of the conference themes of the pain involved in

peacemaking, described in the previous chapter. The current political situation in

Israel/Palestine, a result of two decades of broken promises and commitments made

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throughout the Oslo "peace process" was also cited as a reason to avoid events

specifically focused on "dialogue." While many dialogue groups were convened during

the Oslo years, Palestinians are reluctant to participate in these groups without

acknowledgement of current realities on the ground. This is also consistent with the

literature about the problem of conducting dialogue when there are power asymmetries

between participants (Halabi, 2004; Halabi & Sonnenschein, 2004; Maoz, 2004, 2006):

> The idea of dialogue—is dialogue effective? What's the use of dialogue, when you don't recognize the power imbalances and the realities? And so that's an element there…how Palestinians might perceive a dialogue is different than a Jewish one or whatever. I don't know if it's about numbers, but it seems as though –the Palestinians that I know who have engaged in dialogue, it seems that a lot of them feel abused by it, because they are the tokens, and maybe there are not that many of them around, and in the end, like, when I participated in the dialogue with (a Jewish organization), I learned from it. But I think they, maybe they heard things they didn't want to hear. In the end they could say, we were part of a dialogue group. We engage with Palestinians all the time. We have dinners together. So it gives them a certain thing that I don't want to give them. And why should I? So that's another piece that comes out of previous bad experiences when you talk about dialogue, what that really means. (Palestinian activist, June 2009)

There may be repercussions for Palestinians within their own community who participate

in dialogue groups:

> In their mind, what I do, they perceive it as part of normalization, and they have a very clear position, which I understood. I understand that position. I think that the only way I feel comfortable engaging in projects that have this idea of people from both sides, however you want to define the both sides, I'm only comfortable doing it is as a teacher—that justifies in my mind, the compromises I make. I do have a fear deep inside that once I go back home to Palestine, I'm going to have difficulty finding jobs, because I think I have already been branded as a person who does normalization projects. I don't know for sure, it's a feeling…I feel like I try to pretend that I haven't been branded, and I try to pretend that if given the chance, I can explain that I also—that it's more nuanced—than either yes or no. it's more nuanced. My anti-Zionist work does not necessarily mean that I don't talk to Jewish Americans or Jewish Israelis. I'm not interested in the "let's talk and feel good." I'm interested in let's talk and learn from each other and have a deep rigorous academic discussions that situate the conflict in context of colonization. Period. That I'd be interested in. (Palestinian activist, May 2009)

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One activist was recently invited to join a dialogue group, and had the following

experience with its convener:

> Because in that meeting what I said was tell me, what in your mind are the basic
> premises for this dialogue. What is it that we're doing, and I need to understand
> how you understand the conflict, because if we don't agree on that …I need to
> know that. (The convener) … sounded a bit vague, not complete enough as I
> needed, so I took another way around and said let me tell you what I think about
> this. I would participate in a dialogue group if there was space for us to talk about
> it as this is an act of colonization. The state of Israel is the embodiment of the
> extension of European white male heterosexual rich power that came up with a
> colonizing project. And within that historical perspective we are talking about,
> where do we go from here? I am not interested in any one single life lost. And
> I'm not interested in any particular form of statehood. I don't care. I need that
> acknowledged before I can even engage in a conversation and then share my
> experience and listen to other people's experiences with an open mind. If we're
> pretending that the conflict started in 1967 then I'm not interested. (Palestinian
> activist, May 2009)

The importance of acknowledging the narrative of the other was discussed in the

literature review as an essential component to the process of healing and reconciliation

(Beit-Hallahmi, 1993; Gur-Ze'ev & Pappe, 2003; Pappe, 2006; Warschawski, 2005;

Wineman, 2003). The pain of the trauma is intensified when the perpetrator denies

responsibility. This is further exacerbated by the inherent power asymmetry of the

conflict, both in Israel/Palestine, and in the US. The Zionist narrative maintains

hegemony not only within the American Jewish community, but also in American media

and foreign policy.

The Palestinian conference member felt the conference offered opportunities to

understand the internal walls constructed by both Israelis and Palestinians. This

participant suggested that the Israeli separation barrier is an external manifestation of the

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internal barrier. Palestinians also have internal walls constructed on gender, culture, and

religion, as well as the walls of occupation[120]:

> I think the peace process fail because people who try to find solution for both side, I don't think that they know deeply what is going on, on internal level with Jewish and Palestinian people, since both are traumatized in their life. I think (it's) very important, I recommend this conference…we need conference like (this) to break and demolish this wall…I not feel give up. No. I get more serious and curious. How can I deal with this wall? … In daily life, we live with settler, we deal with settler every day. So this is a reality. Therefore, you need to experience that, but more secure. Because when you deal with settler there. You threatened. You really could get killed. It's a risk to be with settler there. In this conference give you tool how to deal with settler there. You not feel very direct. Also the settler have something inside that is a human. You need to contact that. I always look where is the positive in each person--I always search for that. All of us we have negative, all of us we have weaknesses. I always look, where is the light, where is the positive. (Conference member, three month follow-up interview)

Palestinians and Jews have different needs and aims for inter-group work:

> I think that for American Jews and Israelis who may not have as many opportunities to engage with Palestinians, or it's new for them or they want to engage because it's interesting and new, they are going to come out of it differently than I am. Because I'm still going to come out of it being powerless—I haven't changed anything…But I wasn't sure what the result was—it wasn't clear and defined, you are going to come out of this, and this is what the result is. And trepidation, that I don't know what's going to happen here, and I can't control it. (Palestinian activist, June 2009)

This supports a recommendation of one of the conference members, and suggests the

importance of clarity about the conference task, both in the mind of the directors and

sponsors, and in the way it is framed for the public. This will be discussed further in the

next chapter.

> Also it might be helpful. It can help with organizing. And there are issues. How people can do things together or don't. I think it's different, because there's an objective people can work on. Not like going to a conference and not knowing if the person sitting next to you will be a settler, and would I be arguing with them

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[120]This has been referred to as internalized oppression in the literature (Batts, 1983).

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the whole time. Maybe it was I just didn't want to engage, and it was a big time commitment for me… (Palestinian activist, June 2009)

The Palestinian co-director of the conference wondered whether intra-group,

rather than inter-group work would be more helpful in the current situation:

On one hand I see many reasons of being very pessimistic. On the other hand, I can deeply understand that the two parties need to be retreated, to retrieve itself, to collect itself and to meet itself, and reflect inward, rather than to immediately interact with the other party. There's a time of war, there's a time for ceasefire. I think now, it's not that wrong to say this is a time of a cease of peace. It doesn't mean immediately that I am calling for a war. I think it is a time for each of the parties to contemplate what's going on. What he needs, what he wants from the other, and the self. Because I do perceive that neither the Israelis nor the Palestinians know right now what they want. I think ideologically, they know, but practically, on a daily basis, and concretely, they are very troubled or puzzled, and they don't know the road map. (Conference co-director, three month follow-up interview)

Summary

Participants in *Authority, Leadership and Peacemaking: The Role of the*

Diasporas, were unanimous in their experience of the conference as worthwhile. They

found the experience rich with learning on emotional, cognitive, and political levels.

Learning encompassed several themes: identity, Diaspora, the Palestinian Israeli conflict,

authority and leadership, group relations, and the nature of the learning varied from

individual to individual. Learning continued beyond the boundaries of the conference and

evolved beyond the conference boundaries, and from the first to the second interview.

Interviews with two Palestinian activists offered some additional data about the difficulty

recruiting conference participants, and how such difficulties might be addressed in future

conferences. The next chapter will discuss these findings, as well as those reported in the

previous chapter in more detail.

Chapter 6

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to pilot the use of group relations conference methods to bring together members of Jewish and Palestinian/Arab Diaspora communities (and affected others) in the US to examine the Palestinian Israeli conflict and the role of the Diasporas in the conflict. Preliminary findings from the study suggest that group relations methods may offer rich opportunities for learning about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the role of the Diasporas. In the area of group relations, it also offers some evidence for the usefulness of adding a second task, or otherwise applying the traditional model in new ways. In this chapter I will address what this conference teaches us about the conflict and role of Diaspora communities; what it teaches us about group relations methods and organizations; and what it teaches us about possible use of this method for the examination of other social and political issues.

The chapter is divided into six sections. The first discusses the conference in relation to the conflict and takes a group relations approach to analyzing the conflict. Second I explore participant learning at and after the conference. This is followed by a section with recommendations for future conference iterations on this topic. Then I discuss the limitations of the group relations model. This is followed by a section on the implications for innovation and adaptation in group relations work. I conclude the chapter with a discussion of group relations research and its place in the work.

The Conference and the Conflict: A Parallel Process

Dialogue cannot take place in the absence of participants willing to engage with each other. In the current political climate, there is less interest in a real engagement with

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the other. This was evidenced first by the actual numbers of participants who made a

commitment to attend the conference, and kept that commitment.

The difficulty we had recruiting participants, and the themes that were expressed

in the conference, reflect a very real dynamic of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict:

"disengagement" on the political and civil society levels. Direct talks have been re-

started[121] and the current Obama administration insists on its commitment to "the peace

process." However, official statements from the White House, both before the attack on

the Gaza flotilla and since, ring hollow for many. As evidence of the reality on the

ground, we have only to observe the ongoing siege of Gaza, the increase in Israeli

settlements in the West Bank, the acceleration of Palestinian expulsions, and the

construction of roads for Jews only throughout the West Bank. All of these activities by

Israel continue to build a de-facto apartheid state.

The continued promotion of the two-state solution, without any acknowledgement

of these facts on the ground seems to be disengaged from reality. Thus, the parties are

behaving "as if" they are engaging in a peace process, without actually really engaging

each other or changing behaviors. The disengagement is mirrored in US foreign policy

and in discourse of Diaspora communities, described in Chapter 2. One participant in the

conference hypothesized that the participants in this conference were "recruited on behalf

of society" to "play the conscience of the society":

> Participation was so low that it was shocking to me. It felt as if the organizers had
> been told by the rest of society that this was the organizers' issue and nobody
> else'. It felt as if the society had decided to put its head in the snow and deny the
> genocide that is happening, exactly like when other genocides happen. Every time
> it is shocking to me how the society at large denies genocide as it is happening,

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[121] Though as of this writing they are on fragile ground as the government of Israel has refused to extend
the slowdown of settlement activity in the occupied West Bank.

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> only to wake up and scream bloody murder after it has happened. We were recruited by the society to play the conscience of the society. I am glad I was a part of it and sad to witness huge participation in rallies defending one team against another, just for the sake of dividing into two fighting parties or teams, and not participate in thinking how we as citizens or Diaspora have influence in perpetuating genocide or preventing it. (Conference member, immediate post-conference evaluation)

There is a basic assumption mentality at work. Basic assumption fight/flight is evident in the lack of civil discourse on the topic of the conflict. Voices that are critical of Israeli policy continue to be silenced[122]. Given that the Oslo "peace process" has made little progress after nearly two decades, one can hypothesize that the primary task of the "peace process" is not to actually make peace, but to perpetuate the conflict. As we experienced in the conference, real peacemaking is terrifying. To make a real peace, it is necessary to grieve and to mourn: to face the unbearable pain and loss that the conflict has wrought. As long as the groups remain in conflict, the focus can remain on blaming the other. Attention can then be diverted from facing the enormous destruction caused to the land and to those who live there. It is also necessary to give up long and deeply held beliefs about oneself, one's people, and the other. This loss of identity is truly terrifying: with what do you replace the vision of your own identity? What would it mean for Jews and Palestinians to give up their victim status? What would it mean for each to take responsibility for perpetrating violence on the other?

A group relations perspective offers a different lens with which to view the conflict, that takes non-rational processes into account, and attends to the whole system, including the role that the two parties take up on behalf of the whole system. What are the

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[122] This has been described in Chapter 2 and is also vividly demonstrated in the video at this link: https://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/301/t/10958/shop/custom.jsp?donate_page_KEY=6365

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roles of the other players: the US, UN, Russia, European Union (the "Quartet"), Arab

nations, Diaspora communities, Christian Zionists and others in perpetuating the conflict?

How are their rational and non-rational interests being served by perpetuating the

conflict? What are the Israelis and Palestinians holding—what do they represent—on

behalf of the rest of the world? How are the various stakeholders using the parties in

conflict, both consciously and unconsciously? How do Israelis and Palestinians collude

with this?

As described in the literature review, each of these groups may use the "fighting

pair" of Israel and Palestine to further their own imperial or domestic interests. The role

of the United States in perpetuating the conflict cannot be denied. As Israel's strongest

ally (and supplier of an annual three billion dollars in military aid), the US government

supports and finances the occupation. The American Jewish Diaspora community has

played a substantial role in fueling the conflict through direct financial or material

support, as well as by contributing to the emotional context in which militancy can be

sustained. Arab nations in the region can divert attention from their own domestic

struggles by focusing on the conflict, while doing little to ameliorate it (including

oppression of Palestinian populations in those countries). It is critical that we understand

the non-rational processes, including the roles of trauma, victimization and projection

that fuel the conflict. In the current politically polarized environment, dialogue seems less

and less possible. However, engaging with the realities of the conflict is essential for

learning, adaptation, and change. Diaspora communities (and the American Jewish

Diaspora in particular) must be part of this process.

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Learning During and After the Conference

The purpose of this study was to understand the impact of the conference on participants and the meaning they made of their experiences. The process of making meaning is complex, and does not happen instantly, or in a vacuum (R. Behar, 1996; Phillips & Hardy, 2002). Rather, it happens in relationship to others and over time. While the conference was only three days long, learning continued beyond those boundaries of time and space. For study participants, the interview process also served as a forum to organize their thoughts and feelings about the conference.

Group relations conferences are designed to be "temporary organizations," with a beginning and an end. That learning continues beyond conference boundaries suggests that more formal follow-up experiences may be useful. The Center for the Study of Groups and Social Systems, a Boston based group relations organization and affiliate of the AK Rice Institute, routinely offers half day follow-up application groups for conference members one to three months post-conference. Such structures offer interested participants an additional outlet for understanding and making meaning of their experiences. Running a series of conferences on the theme, (in the same way the Nazareth conferences have done) may serve that purpose. As some participants noted, learning in conferences is cumulative, and returning participants can build on their learning from previous conferences.

The research is consistent with previous group relations research about the ability of the method to facilitate powerful personal learning. The learning that each study participant took was uniquely his or her own. Conference structure allows for many levels of experience and understanding amongst the participants, and also allows

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participants to return and build upon learning in previous conferences. Because

conference membership and staff is different each time, no conference is exactly the

same.

As described in the previous two chapters, the dynamics at play during the

planning process and throughout the conference, mirrored dynamics of the Palestinian-

Israeli conflict (around the role of gender, disengagement, complexity of identity, the role

of the Diasporas, etc.). Therefore, exploring those themes in the here and now of a

conference setting has the potential to help to illuminate the larger dynamics of the

conflict and offer opportunities for learning and transformation. In this conference, there

was great variability of learning about the conflict and the role of Diasporas in it. Those

with less intimate knowledge of the conflict reported a greater amount of learning in that

area. Those who spent time in the region or were actively engaged in the conflict reported

little or no learning about the conflict, although they reported more personal learning.

This raises the question of whether activists knowledgeable about the Palestinian Israeli

conflict might be able to develop new perspectives on the conflict if they were to

participate in such a conference with other activists and/or a more experienced staff.

Variability in learning may reflect flaws in the conference design, as well as the initial

ambivalence and skepticism of the sponsors and conference director about the feasibility

of integrating the double tasks of the conference. Despite the variability in learning, all

of the participants in this study found the experience worthwhile or very worthwhile.

Recommendations for Future Conferences on the Topic

Whether this form of learning can ultimately have an impact on the conflict itself

remains to be seen. Conference learning and meaning-making build over time, and are

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not immediately evident. Participants in the conference will continue to be surveyed and

interviewed until one year post-conference, in order to assess how they integrate and

apply the learning over time. The original intent for this project was to pilot this method

and run a series of conferences on the theme over time (much like the way the Nazareth

series has run over the last 14 years). It would then be possible to measure the impact of

the conferences on individuals over time, as well as the impact on individuals of

attending multiple conferences.

> As we stated in the conference brochure:

> The primary task of the conference is **to learn – through experience – how groups function, how we exercise leadership in groups, and how we can become more effective leaders** within the organizations and communities in which we live and work. Uniquely, we will have the opportunity to focus on those elements of leadership that can often be obscured from view – the hidden challenges.

The lack of clarity about how to integrate the double task was problematic in our

recruitment campaign. Future conferences need to be much clearer in framing the

primary task of the conference (to explore the role of Diaspora communities in the

Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and their potential in peacemaking). Historically, it

has been difficult to explain or "sell" group relations conferences in a succinct

and coherent way, while still communicating the richness and complexity of the

experience and the learning opportunities offered. In order to increase interest,

recruitment might be done on an organizational, rather than individual level.

Rather than mount free-standing conferences open to the public, they might

instead be framed as organizational interventions. That is, organizations that are

engaged with the conflict and with Diaspora communities might be approached to

consider sending five or more of their staff to attend the conference. In this way

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they could bring learning about their internal organizational dynamics back to

their home organizations. The conference could also provide a space where

organizations might explore opportunities for collaboration. This might be part of

the inter-group event. Such an intervention might begin with Arab and Palestinian

organizations and the Jewish left, or within each community separately (as

suggested by one of the participants). This brings the intervention more overtly

into the action research realm. While we attempted to recruit a variety of

participants along the political spectrum for this conference, it is likely no

accident, that those who showed up were more allied with the peace camp.

Future conferences might more effectively integrate the theme into the

actual conference structure/design. For instance, the Institutional Event (IE) might

be re-designed so that members are assigned to their own identity groups

(including a group for "others"). From there, the task could be to examine the

inter-relatedness of the groups, as well as the intra-group dynamics (a standard

part of the IE task—see appendix R) in relation to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

The group assignments would bring issues regarding identity and conflict into the

here and now event. Alternatively, as originally planned, study groups might also

serve to better integrate the two tasks, by creating both heterogeneous (across

identity) and homogeneous (same identity) groups. This allows space for the

similarities to be seen in the differences, and the differences in the similarities

(Agazarian & Philibossian, 1988).

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Limitations of Group Relations Methods

The research and my own conference experiences over the past 25 years have raised questions for me about the limitations of the group relations conference model. The dynamics of the group relations world were salient throughout the conference. While this is a common occurrence in conferences, the dynamics were especially salient here where over half of the members were actively working in group relations and only two had no prior experience. One of the ongoing challenges that group relations organizations in the US have faced over time has been the struggle around the issue of internal vs. external focus—that is, the tendency to be self-referential and to operate as closed rather than open systems engaged with the larger world. While sponsoring organizations may not be able (or even desire) to avoid the importation of these dynamics, it is important to remain cognizant of them and the ways they may skew interpretation of conference dynamics.

While learning is variable across individuals and across conferences, there are issues/themes that tend to show up in most conferences: themes dealing with sexuality, aggression, power, authority and leadership. Part of this is rooted in psychoanalytic theory upon which the method is based, and part may be due to the group relations conference culture that develops. The danger for those who continually return to group relations conferences is that expectations and assumptions about what is "supposed to happen" at a conference may be imported by participants and unconsciously or consciously re-enacted. This is why the dynamics of group relations conferences often reflect the dynamics of their sponsoring organizations. Sponsoring organizations and practitioners must beware of continuously re-producing themselves in conferences. While

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such a re-creation can enhance learning about the internal dynamics of the sponsoring

organizations (assuming that is the conference task), it may also create an "as-if" kind of

environment that inhibits new learning. New learning can happen if consultants and

members alike can approach the work "without memory or desire" (Bion, 1988)

Implications for Group Relations: Innovation and Adaptation

Group relations conferences have the capacity to actively engage up to 100 or

more people in understanding the nature of authority, leadership, and followership. Many

current community and organizational engagement strategies[123] have their roots in the

work of the Tavistock Institute. As practiced, they neglect the role of the unconscious in

group, organizational and social behavior. This is something that group relations

organizations can bring to understanding and engaging citizens about larger social issues.

This conference has dealt specifically with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the

role of their respective Diaspora communities. I am interested in building on this pilot

project to see the impact of repeated interventions over time. Again, it should be noted

that in the US Diasporas, as in the region, there is tremendous power asymmetry between

the groups. However, this does not take away from the importance for both groups to

work through the impact of the conflict. Dialogue in the absence of political and

structural change will not resolve the conflict. At the same time, the conflict cannot be

fully resolved without addressing the psycho-social impact of trauma on both groups over

generations.

The method might be further adapted to work with other conflicts and their

respective Diaspora communities, or as a way to engage civil society to examine the

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[123] such as the Search Conference (Emery & Purser, 1996), Future Search (Emery & Purser, 1996; Weisbord & Janoff, 2000) and Open Space Technology (Owen, 2008)

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various challenges and conflicts we face. Research has suggested that conflicts around

the world are more likely to re-ignite when the parties have Diaspora communities in the

United States. The role of gender in conflict may also be explored using these methods.

With an all female staff, and either an all female or mixed membership, a conference

might specifically explore the role and impact of gender on war-making and peace-

making.

Historically, members of group relations organizations in the US have been

conflicted about the application of these methods to the understanding of and intervention

in larger societal problems. This may be part of the problem now faced by group relations

centers across the US, many of which are struggling to survive[124]. They have become

closed systems that are no longer engaged with the outside environment. Despite attempts

to remake itself over the last decade, the survival of the national organization in the US is

precarious. Group relations organizations, with goals of understanding the rational and

non-rational processes in organizations, often get trapped in the web of their own non-

rational process. Wilfred Bion (1961) developed his ideas about unconscious group

processes and basic assumption groups in response to a larger societal crisis: the paucity

of medical care and personnel for increasing numbers of shell-shocked soldiers returning

from war. To stay relevant, group relations organizations in the US might do well to re-

think the way we do business, including how we define our primary task. Is it to continue

running free standing group relations conferences for their own sake? I assert that group

relations conferences might be better thought of as a tool, a means to an end, rather than

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[124] Indeed, one of the project's partner organizations decided to close this year.

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as an end in itself. To remain relevant, group relations conferences may best be used as a tool to understand or intervene in particular group, organizational or social problems.

Group relations conference innovations are not just about how we structure conferences, or what new elements we had. We must also attend to our expectations and assumptions about what is "supposed" to happen in a conference setting. Without a change in our assumptions and expectations about group processes, an "innovation in the mind," structural change alone is unlikely to create an environment for innovation.

Implications for Group Relations Research

This study was an in depth qualitative case study of a group relations conference and program evaluation of conference outcomes. The study is limited in a few ways. First, my multiple roles plus my shared theoretical orientation (group relations) with the staff group and sponsoring organizations provided the framework in which I viewed and understood the data. Having this point of reference provides a structure for data interpretation, but may also be a source of bias. Second, the study focused on a single conference, and its small sample size does not allow for the findings to be generalized to all group relations conferences. Future research may serve to fill in some of the gaps of this study. Despite these limitations, the study does suggest areas for further inquiry and action.

If group relations organizations are serious about continuing to hold and promote conferences, then it is essential for them to systematize an evaluation process for all of their conference offerings. The availability of online tools, which may be used to collect and tabulate data makes this relatively simple to implement. An ongoing evaluation process will provide further data to evaluate the effectiveness of these conferences over time, and to look for the existence of particular patterns. Depending on budget, future

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evaluation research might use survey methods exclusively, or employ mixed methods

(interviews and surveys) such as in this study. Open-ended interviews of select

participants will enhance our understanding of the processes at work during and after the

conference that facilitate or hinder learning; discern some of the variables that contribute

to participant learning; and offer more insight into how members make meaning of their

conference experience over time. They might also suggest additional structures before,

during, or after the conference that might facilitate participants' ability to make use of

their conference learning. While I have limited the findings reported here to a three

month period after the conference, I will be following up with participants over the

course of one year post-conference. Those findings will be reported elsewhere.

Longitudinal studies will help elucidate how participants make sense of their

experience and how the meaning they make of their experiences changes over time. How

attendance at multiple conferences impacts participants is another important area of

inquiry. The combination of narrative reports with survey research can offer a broader

perspective of particular conferences and evaluate the effectiveness of group relations

conferences in facilitating learning and change. Such research may suggest conference

design innovations, including post conference activities, to promote participants' ability

to make sense of their conference learning. The dynamics of the larger organizational and

social context and how they may influence the evolution of conference dynamics over

time may also be studied.

In conclusion this research offers some evidence that group relations can be a

powerful tool for learning about and intervening in political and social issues and

conflicts. The conference structure creates a unique space for where personal, social and

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political learning can be integrated. Group relations organizations have been struggling in

recent years and have risked losing their relevancy as they remain internally focused. The

hope for future group relations work may rest with applications aimed at tackling real-

world problems and conflicts.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Chronological Timeline of Select Events in the History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict[125]

6th Century B.C.E   Thriving Jewish Diaspora in Mesopotamia and Egypt
Palestine is melting pot of nations, tribes, and cultures: Canaanites, Jebusites, Philistines, viewed as lineal ancestors of Palestinians.

70 C.E.   Destruction of Jewish Temple in Jerusalem

1780-   In Europe, Jewish modernization, enlightenment "Haskalah" period. Moses Mendelssohn formulates idea of integrating Jewish identity with modern values. Development of secular Jewish elite in opposition to the culture of Rabbinical Judaism (Beit-Hallahmi, 1993)

1800s   Secularization and modernization trends continue. Jews actively participate in radical revolutionary movements, (such as communism), and are also involved in secular and religious Jewish identity movements (e.g., Orthodoxy, Zionism, Bundism). Revival of Hebrew language.

1858   Ottoman land code deprives Palestinians of their right to live on the land, cultivate it and pass it on to their heirs. The upper classes had manipulated the legal process and registered large areas of land as personal property (Khalidi, 1997).

1878   First Zionist agricultural colony in Palestine (Petah Tikvah)

1882-1903   25,000 Jewish immigrants, mainly from Russia, begin to settle in Palestine, known in Israeli historiography as the *First Aliyah*

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[125] Unless otherwise noted, events from 1878-1948 are quoted from Pappe (2007, pp. 282-287), sometimes verbatim. Information about the 1956 Sinai campaign and the settler movement, post 1967 mostly gleaned from Gorenberg (2006). Statistics and other information about waves of immigration to Israel retrieved March 8, 2008 from:
http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Facts%20About%20Israel/History/Facts%20About%20Israel-%20History and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aliyah#Middle_Eastern_Jews
Information about PLO retrieved March 8, 2008 from: http://imeu.net/news/article0046.shtml. Other information gleaned from (Beit-Hallahmi, 1993; Gorenberg, 2006; Khalidi, 2006; D. Rose, 2008; Shain, 2000).
As further demonstrated in Appendix B, there is considerable dispute around how particular events are named (or even whether or not they occurred). The websites noted above are aligned with the Israeli and Palestinian perspectives, respectively, and some of the framing of particular events cited here may reflect that.

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1885	Pittsburgh Platform: declares American reform Jews do not consider themselves a nation and do not anticipate returning to Palestine (Shain, 2000)
1886	Palestinian peasants attack settlement of Petah Tikvah. One settler is killed and others are wounded before Ottoman troops intervene (Khalidi, 1997).
1896	*Der Judenstaat,* advocating the establishment of a Jewish state, is published by Austro-Hungarian Jewish writer Theodor Herzl. Jewish Colonization Association (JCA), founded by German Baron Maurice de Hirsch in 1881 to aid Zionist settlers begins operations in Palestine
1897	First World Zionist Congress convenes in Basel, Switzerland. It creates the World Zionist Organization (WZO), which calls for a home for the Jewish people in Palestine.
1901	Jewish National Fund (JNF) set up to acquire land in Palestine for the WZO; non-Palestinian absentee landlords sold land. Purchases are opposed by rural and urban elite. The land is to be used and worked solely by Jews (Khalidi, 1997).
1901-1904	Tensions between Zionists and Palestinian farmers in Tiberias area. Arab labor is replaced by Jewish labor, leading to public expression of anti-Zionism and a nascent sense of shared identity by Palestinians (Khalidi, 1997).
1904-1914	40,000 Zionist immigrants arrive in Palestine, mainly from Russia and Poland comprising 6% of population. Referred to as the *Second Aliyah*
1909	Establishment of first kibbutz Founding of Tel Aviv, north of Arab town of Jaffa
1914	Beginning of World War I
1916	Sykes-Picot agreement: secret document between Britain and France to divide the Middle East
1917	Balfour Declaration: British Secretary of State Lord Balfour writes letter of support for "a Jewish national home in Palestine." Ottoman forces in Jerusalem surrender to British General Allenby
1918	WWI ends and Ottoman rule in Palestine is over. Palestine is occupied by the allies, under General Allenby

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1919	First Palestinian National Congress in Jerusalem rejects Balfour declaration, demands independence. Chaim Weizmann, of the Zionist Commission at the Paris Peace Conference, calls for a Palestine "as Jewish as England is English," while other commissioners say "as many Arabs as possible should be persuaded to emigrate." Winston Churchill wrote that "there are Jews, whom we are pledged to introduce into Palestine, and who take it for granted that the local population will be cleared out to suit their convenience.
1917-1923	In Arab press, noted shift from Arab/Ottoman identity to Palestinian/Arab identity
1919-1923	35,000 Zionists immigrate to Palestine, with Jews now 12% of population, and holding 3% of land. Known as the *Third Aliyah,* mostly from Russia
1917-1923	In the Arab press, there is a noted shift from Arab/Ottoman identity to Palestinian/Arab identity (Khalidi, 1997).
1920	Founding of Hagana, Zionist underground military organization Britain assigned Palestinian Mandate by the Supreme Council of San Remo Peace Conference
1921	Protests in Jaffa against large-scale Zionist immigration
1922	League of Nations Council approves Britain's Mandate for Palestine British census of Palestine: 78% Muslim, 11% Jewish, 9.6 % Christian, total population 757,182
1923	British Mandate for Palestine officially comes into force
1924-1932	67,000 Zionist immigrants come to Palestine, half of whom are from Poland. Known as the *Fourth Aliyah.* Jews now comprise 16% of population and own 4% of land
1925	Revisionist Party is founded in Paris, calling for Jewish state in Palestine and Transjordan
1928	Muslim Brotherhood established in Egypt(Becker, October 2007)
1929	Riots in Palestine over Jewish claims to Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, with 133 Jews and 116 Arabs killed, mainly by British Chief Rabbi of Iraq denounces Zionism and Balfour declaration

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1931	The underground military organization, Etzel (also known as the Irgun) founded to support more militancy against the Arabs. Jewish community now 16.9% of total population of 1.03 million British director of development for Palestine publishes report on "landless Arabs" caused by Zionist colonization
1932	First regularly constituted Palestinian political party, the Istiliqlal (Independence) Party founded
1933-1939	Wave of immigration from Germany, known as the *Fifth Aliyah*
1936	A conference of Palestinian National Committees demands "no taxation without representation" (Pappe, 2007). Beginning of Palestinian revolt (referred to as riots in Zionist narrative), which lasts until 1939.
1937	Peel Commission recommends partition of Palestine, with 33% of country to become Jewish state. Part of Palestinian population is to be transferred from this state. British dissolve all Palestinian political organizations, deport five leaders, establish military courts against Palestinian rebellion
1939	White Paper is approved by British House of Commons, which plans conditional independence of Palestine after 10 years and immigration of 15,000 Jews into Palestine each year for next 5 years. World War II begins
1940	Land Transfer Regulations come into force, protecting Palestinian land against Zionist acquisition
1945	World War II ends
1947	Britain tells newly formed UN that it will withdraw from Palestine UN forms Special Committee for Palestine (UNSCOP) which recommends partition, offering Jews 56% of the land (after Zionists had demanded 80%) UN adopts Resolution 181 on partition of Palestine calling for 1) creation of Jewish and Arab states with specified boundaries 2) special international zone in Jerusalem 3) a constitution for the Jewish state 4) creation of economic union for two states 5) no expropriation of Arab land by Jewish state 6) residents become citizens of the state in which they reside 7) Jaffa was to be an Arab enclave in the Jewish state

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	Zionists begin mass expulsion of Palestinians (Beit-Hallahmi, 1993)
1948	War breaks out between Jews and Arabs. US delegate to UN announces that the role of the Security Council is peacekeeping rather than enforcing partition Israel declares independence in May Israeli "War of Independence" is Palestinian "Nakba" or catastrophe Nearly 800,000 Palestinians dispossessed, 531 villages destroyed, and 11 urban neighborhoods emptied (Pappe, 2007) Mapai forms government with National Religious Party December 11, 1948: UN resolution 194 establishes Conciliation Commission, calling for, among other things, the return of refugees wishing to live in peace with their neighbors or compensation. (Laqueur & Rubin, 2008).
1949	Separate armistice agreements signed with Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria
1948-1952	Mass immigration from Europe and Arab countries "Operation Magic Carpet" brings entire (49,000) Yemenite community to Israel in 1949-50. In 1951, 114,000 Iraqi Jews immigrated.
1950	"Law of Return" one of the "Basic Laws" allows Jews from anywhere in the world to immigrate to Israel and obtain Israeli citizenship immediately. Union of Palestinian Students founded at Cairo University by engineering student later known as Yasser Arafat. George Habash and others form another student group at American University of Beirut. By mid-1950s, disparate groups formed a network, though each organization was small and had its own agenda (Khalidi, 1997).
1956	President Nasser of Egypt nationalizes Suez Canal Sinai Campaign: Israel, in collusion with Britain and France, seizes the Sinai Peninsula. Immense pressure from US president Eisenhower leads to Israeli withdrawal to 1947 Armistice lines.
1959	American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) is formed
1964	The Arab League founds Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO)

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1967	For Israel, the "Six-Day War", for Palestinians, the "June 5 Aggression." Israel occupies the West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights, later annexes East Jerusalem. Unlike Sinai Campaign, Israel meets with little pressure from the US to withdraw from the territories it occupied (Gorenberg, 2006)

November 22: UN Security Council Resolution 242 calling for "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict", and "respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force" ("History of failed peace talks," 2007). |
1968-1970	September: Nasser dies of a heart attack (Tolan, 2006) Continued border conflicts with Egypt, known in Israel as the "War of Attrition"
1970	"Black September" Jordanian army defeats PLO and expels it from Jordan (Khalidi, 1997).
1972	Eight Palestinian gunmen from Black September (a splinter group of Fatah, after civil war in Jordan) entered Olympic village at Munich, holding hostage, and then killing Israeli athletes (Tolan, 2006)
1973	"Yom Kippur War" Coordinated attack on Israel by Egypt and Syria. Element of surprise leaves Israelis very shaken

UN Resolution Resolution 338 called for a ceasefire in the war of October 1973 and urged the implementation of 242 "in all its parts". |
| 1974 | Arab League recognizes the PLO as the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. PLO is granted observer status in the United Nations ("Background briefings: Who represents the Palestinians officially before the world community?," 2006-2007) |
| 1975 | Gush Emunim (Block of the Faithful) confronts Rabin government with demand to settle on the outskirts of Nablus in the West Bank, marking a turning point in settler movement. |

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1975-76	War in Lebanon: Syria intervenes against PLO. Three refugee camps overrun by Phalangists (backed by Israel and Syria) massacre and expulsion followed by series of clashes, many involving PLO. Culminates in Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 (Khalidi, 1997).
1977	Labor Party loses power to right wing Likud block, escalating trends towards increased militancy and settlement activity US Jewish Diaspora begins to assert its voice in Israeli policy, though still hesitates to voice criticism of Israeli settlement policy (Shain, 2000).
	November, 1977: Anwar Sadat makes historic visit to Jerusalem ("History of failed peace talks," 2007)
1978	Camp David Accords include framework for comprehensive peace in the Middle East and proposal for Palestinian self-government.
1979	Emigration of 70,000 Iranian Jews following revolution (though most settled in the US).
1982	Israeli invasion of Lebanon Overall, 19,000 are killed, with 30,000 wounded since 1975. Palestinian leaders and institutions are expelled to Tunisia, Yemen, Sudan, Syria, Iraq, and Libya (Khalidi, 1997). Massacres at Palestinian refugee camps Sabra and Shatila.
1987	First Palestinian Intifada (Uprising) or the "children's intifada" begins. PLO leadership surprised by uprising, though later backed it. Palestine, rather than Diaspora became the center of Palestinian politics (Khalidi, 1997). Beginning of mass immigration of Jews from former Soviet Union (over 1 million in total).
	Sheikh Ahmed Yassin and others establish Hamas (Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiya: Islamic Resistance Movement)
1988	Palestinian Declaration of Independence
1988	First Israeli Orthodox attempt to alter Israeli policy on "who is a Jew," signaling a rise of diasporic intervention in Israeli domestic and foreign policy (Shain, 2000).
1991	October-November 1991 Madrid Peace Conference, co-sponsored by US and Soviet Union. Jordan, Lebanon and Syria invited with Israel and Egypt. Palestinians invited as part of Jordanian

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    delegation, not under the PLO ("History of failed peace talks,"
2007)
Direct talks begin between Israel and Syria
"Operation Solomon": immigration of Jews from Ethiopia
1980s-1990s

1993   Oslo Accords involving Israel and the PLO recognizing each other.
Palestinians were to gain autonomy, first in the Gaza Strip and
Jericho, and later in larger parts of the West Bank for a 5 year
interim period, to be followed by a final peace agreement. Issues
related to the future of Jerusalem and the holy sites, Palestinian
refugees, settlements, and borders would be left for final-status
negotiations. In large pieces of the West Bank, Israel is responsible
for security, while the newly formed Palestinian Authority (PA) is
responsible for civil administration. Palestinian Authority would be
set up for five year transitional period, leading to a permanent
settlement based on resolutions 242 and 338 ("History of failed
peace talks," 2007).

The Israeli right sees the agreement as a mortal threat to their
vision of a Greater Israel. Hamas and other Palestinian groups did
not accept Oslo and launched suicide attacks on Israelis.
Accords are welcomed by majority of American Jews. Right wing
Jewish groups and Orthodox groups in the US are solidly opposed.
Oslo was only partially implemented.

First attack on World Trade Center in NYC

1994   Peace treaty between Jordan and Israel (stemming from 1991
Madrid conference)

1995   Oslo II accords at lay out Israel's withdrawal from the West
Bank's cities
Yitzhak Rabin assassinated by radical supporter of the Whole Land
movement, Yigal Amir, in November

1996   Passage of Anti-Terrorism and Death Penalty Act of 1996,
allowing for the arrest and deportation of non-US citizens without
due process under "guilt by association" standards (Orfalea, 2006).

1998   Wye River summit with President Bill Clinton, PM Netanyahu,
foreign minister Ariel Sharon and PA leader Yassir Arafat. Under
Clinton's pressure, Netanyahu signed agreement to continue
implementing Oslo accords by turning over an additional 13% of
West Bank land to the PA. Afterwards, Sharon urged settlers to
"grab more hills, expand the territory." (Gorenberg, 2006, p. 371)

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1999	Pittsburgh Convention of American reform movement moves away from 1885 platform to encourage aliyah to Israel (Shain, 2000)
1991-2000	Continued settlement activity, land seizures, and the building of a network of bypass roads encircling Palestinian population in West Bank and Gaza. From 1993-2000, the population of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza (excluding East Jerusalem) increased to 198,000 from 116,000. Israel begins building separation wall.
2000	Summer 2000 Camp David summit: attempt to address "final status" issues, including borders, Jerusalem and refugees. Second Palestinian or "Al-Aqsa" intifada breaks out, following appearance of Ariel Sharon on the Temple Mount (a site holy to Islam)
2001	Taba peace talks, differences narrowed but not overcome. Ariel Sharon elected in February 2001. ("History of failed peace talks," 2007). 9/11/01 attacks on World Trade Center Towers in NYC and Pentagon in Washington DC October: US invasion of Afghanistan 10/26/01 passage of USA Patriot Act, giving the US government the power of search, seizure and wiretapping (Orfalea, 2006) 12/3/01 Ariel Sharon returns from meeting with George W. Bush in Washington, and declares war on the Palestinian Authority. Suicide bombings in Israel increase and Israel re-occupies the Palestinian territories. Arafat's compound in Ramallah under siege, and he surges in popularity (Tolan, 2006)
2002	Saudi Peace Plan, presented at Arab summit in Beirut. Israel would withdraw to lines of June 1967, a Palestinian state would be set up in the West Bank and Gaza, and there would be a "just solution" to the refugee issue. In return, Arab countries would recognize Israel. ("History of failed peace talks," 2007). Summer: Ariel Sharon intensifies policy of home demolitions of relatives of suspected terrorists. Increase of suicide bombings in Israel. Israel re-occupies West Bank (Tolan, 2006)

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2003	Roadmap for peace negotiated under auspices of the "quartet" (the United States, European Union, United Nations and Russia), proposing a phased timetable: I: statements in support of two state solution from both sides, Palestinians would stop terror attacks, draw constitution and hold elections; Israel would stop settlement activities and act with military restraint. II: creation of a Palestinian state with "provisional borders"; III: final agreement talks (scheduled for 2005, but never happened)
	US invades Iraq
	Geneva Accord: informal agreement by Yossi Beilin (Israel) and Yasser Abed Rabbo (Palestine). Main compromise was Palestine giving up "right of return" in exchange for most of W. Bank, including a major settlement. Other settlements closer to border would be kept and swapped with land in Israel. No official status ("History of failed peace talks," 2007).
2004	PLO chair Yasir Arafat dies, replaced by Mahmoud Abbas as head of the PLO
2005	Mahmoud Abbas is elected president of PA. Legislative Council elections, originally set for July are postponed until January 2006. 250,000 Israelis live in 125 officially recognized West Bank settlements. Another 180,000 live in annexed areas of East Jerusalem. 16,000 Israelis live in 32 settlements in the Golan Heights, which was annexed in 1981. 9000 Israeli settlers resided in 21 settlements in the Gaza strip until the "disengagement" in the summer of 2005. In addition to religious and militant settlers, the population also includes many who moved to the occupied territories for a better quality of life (Gorenberg, 2006). 171 Palestinian civil society organizations call for boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) (Hijab, 2009).
2006	January: Palestinian Legislative Council elections result in victory of Hamas over Fateh. US, European Union (EU), Russia and UN (the "Quartet") demand that the new Hamas government renounce violence, recognize Israel's right to exist, and accept terms of all previous agreements. Hamas refuses, but offers 10 year ceasefire with Israel. Quartet shuts off aid (~ $2 billion) to PA. Israel clamps down on Palestinian freedom of movement, particularly in Gaza and detains 64 Hamas officials, including Legislative Council members. After kidnapping of Israeli soldier, Israel launches military campaign in Gaza.

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US pressures Abbas to dissolve Hamas government. Promises but does not follow through on $86 million aid package to dismantle terrorism and restore law and order.

2007   Fatah forces storm Islamic University of Gaza, Hamas retaliates. Power sharing deal is struck under auspices of King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia to establish National Unity government, where Ismail Haniya of Hamas remains Prime Minister, and Fatah members hold important posts.
Israeli blockade of Gaza intensifies. (D. Rose, 2008)

2008   President George W. Bush vows to resume peace process and reach agreement between Palestinians and Israelis by end of his term of office.
Israeli elections result in slight edge of "centrist" Kadima party. Party head Tzippi Livni unable to form a government. Benyamin Netanyahu of Likud is asked to form government.
Violence intensifies: Hamas fires rockets into Israel; Israel escalates military incursions into Gaza.

December 27: Israel begins sustained air assault on Gaza.

2009   January: Israeli ground invasion of Gaza.
January 19: Ceasefire declared in Gaza.
http://www.btselem.org/english/OTA/?WebbTopicNumber=30&image.x=8&image.y=8
1434 Palestinians killed, including 960 civilians. Thirteen Israelis killed, including three civilians and soldiers who died from "friendly fire".

February: Hampshire College becomes first US college to divest from corporations supporting Israel's military occupation.

March: Right wing Israeli government is formed including extremist Avigdor Leiberman of Yisrael Beitenu (Israel Our Homeland) party, who ran on platform of loyalty tests and "transfer" of Palestinians (Murray, 2009).

September: The Goldstone report, formally known as the "Report of the United Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict," found that both Hamas and the Israeli military committed war crimes during the 27 December 2008 to 18 January 2009 Gaza assault (Clifton, 2010).

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November: Israel announces 10 month suspension of new building in the West Bank, under intense US pressure.
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/8670726.stm

2010 March: Indirect talks between Israeli and Palestinian leaders stopped when Palestinians pulled out of talks in March after Israeli municipal authorities approved plans for new homes in the East Jerusalem settlement of Ramat Shlomo. The announcement was made during a visit to Israel by US Vice-President Joe Biden and caused great strain in Israeli-US relations.
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/8670726.stm

May: Proximity talks scheduled to re-start, with US Middle East envoy George Mitchell shuttling between the two sides.
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/8670726.stm

May 31: Israel attacks flotilla of eight humanitarian aid ships en route to Gaza. Ten activists are killed, and several dozen are injured.

June: Israel announces a "relaxation" of the blockade on Gaza

July: Conversion law, which would make Orthodox Jewish law the basis of conversion and place authority for conversion in the hands of the chief rabbinate, passes a committee in Knesset. Prime Minister Netanyahu postpones submission of bill until January after American Jewish groups protest (fearing that their more lenient conversion processes would be invalidated)
http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/24/world/middleeast/24israel.html?th&emc=th

September: Direct talks between Israeli and Palestinian leaders begin, but are halted when Israel fails to extend the slowdown of building in Israeli settlements.
http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/29/world/middleeast/29nations.html?ref=middle_east_peace_process
Jewish boat with humanitarian aid sets sail for Gaza and is intercepted in international waters.
http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/29/world/middleeast/29gaza.html?_r=1&hp

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Appendix B[126]: Israeli and Palestinian Narratives of Select Events

Israeli Narrative	Palestinian Narrative
1. Zionism: "The national movement of the Jewish people. Developed in Eastern and Central Europe as a result of disappointment with the promise of emancipation, continuation of anti-Semitism, the inspiration of other national movements and the continual connection between the people of Israel and the Land of Israel" (p. 18).	1. Zionism: "A colonialist political movement ascribing a national character and racial attributes to Judaism ... Led to Jewish immigration to Palestine, claiming historical and religious rights" (p. 16).
2. The Balfour Declaration: "The first time any country expressed support for Zionism... expressed the support of the British government for establishing a national home for the Jewish people in the Land of Israel" (p. 3).	2. The Balfour Declaration: "The unholy marriage between Britain and the Zionist movement...this led to usurping a homeland and making an entire people homeless in an unprecedented manner" (p. 7-8).
3. The War of Independence: "On November 29, 1947, the United Nations approved by a large majority the proposal for two independent states alongside each other (Resolution 181). The Jewish community celebrated that night with dancing in the streets. However, the next morning acts of terror began, carried out by the country's Arabs and volunteers from Arab countries, who did not accept the Partition Plan" (p. 20-22).	3. The Nakba (Catastrophe) of 1948: " On 11/29/1947, the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 181 which calls for the partition of Palestine into two states, Arab and Jewish. This was the start of the countdown to the establishment of the state of Israel, on May 15, 1948, and the 1948 Catastrophe which uprooted and dispersed the Palestinian people. (p. 20)...the word "catastrophe" (nakba) actually expresses what happened to this nation, which was ...the assassination of rights, murder of the land and uprooting of human beings. This did not occur by chance" (p. 25).
4. Palestinian refugees: "During the very first stages of the war Arab residents began leaving their communities in the land of Israel. The first were those who were well off economically..." Later, "Hagana forces began to deport Arabs. However, not all Arabs were deported and there were no high level political orders to do so, although military commanders were given the freedom to act as they saw fit. Thus the flight was due to deporting and frightening the Arabs, and because of their own fears without regard to Israeli actions. During the course of the war about 370 Arab villages were destroyed. (p. 25)	4. Palestinian refugees: "The destruction of 418 Palestinian villages inside the green line [pre-1967 border], concealing the landmarks of Palestinian life and the massacres against the Palestinian people are the best evidence for the brutality to which the Palestinians were exposed. They were dispersed throughout the world...The behavior of the Zionist gangs was intended to sow terror and fear among the Arabs to cause them to leave their villages, especially after the massacre at Deir Yassin." (p. 25-26)
5. The Six-Day War June5-10, 1967): "During the month that preceded the war Egypt stationed armored units and troops in the Sinai Desert (in violation of agreements) signed a mutual defense pact with Syria Jordan and Iraq, while Egytian President Jamal Abdul Nasser delivered inciting speeches about going to war with Israel to destroy the Zionist state...With no other choice and in order to prevent being trapped, Israel delivered a	5. The June 1967 war: "The war that Israel started against the Arab countries is known as the 'June 5 aggression' because Israel was the initiator of the declaration of battle and opened an offensive." (Kashti, 2007, April 9)

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[126] Passages are quoted from The Peace Research Institute in the Middle East (PRIME) project. Directed by Adwan and Bar-On (2003) the project brought together Israeli and Palestinian teachers to develop a school curriculum that would show both the Israeli and Palestinian historical narratives side by side.

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preemptive blow which came as a surprise to the enemies...Israel achieved a brilliant victory which changed the history of the land of Israel" (p. 37)	
6. Israeli policy in the occupied territories: "Israel instituted an occupation regime in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, at first with a military administration, and later with a civil administration. At first, the Palestinian population welcomed the occupation as a blessing; for the first time universities were established, there was plenty of work, the economy grew, quality of life improved, and there were emotional encounters with Israeli Arabs. At the same time, the members of the Greater Land of Israel movement proceeded with settlement activity in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, with the ultimate goal of remaining there forever" (p. 42).	6. Israeli policy in the occupied territories: "For the first 5 years of occupation, the Israeli government did not have a clear policy regarding the occupied territories. Later on the occupation authorities started confiscating land and building settlements. Israel, whose only interest was security for the Israeli army and the settlers, imposed direct martial law in the occupied territories without taking into consideration the needs of the Palestinians" (p. 38-9).
8. The PLO: "In keeping with the PLO Charter, during the 1970's-80's PLO organizations waged a bitter war of terror and violence. Planes were hijacked, passengers murdered; Israeli citizens were murdered throughout the world, and Jewish institutions and their workers were attacked. The terrorists also murdered Israelis within the country's borders" (p.43)	8. The PLO: "The period after the catastrophe was characterized by a political vacuum; there was no Palestinian leadership to take charge of affairs, organize the struggle, achieve demands for return, self-determination and defense of people's rights. This led to the blossoming of nationalism, which led to the rise of the PLO as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in 1964" (p.31).
9. The first intifada: "On December 8, 1987, an Israeli truck hit a Palestinian car in the Gaza Strip, killing four of its passengers. The Palestinians claimed it was a deliberate attack and described it as cold-blooded murder" (p. 46)	9. The first intifada: "Just one day before the intifada erupted on December 8, 1987, an Israeli truck driver in Gaza deliberately crashed into an Arab car. Those killed were the first Palestinian martyrs of the Intifada. After the news spread, huge demonstrations erupted all over the West Bank and Gaza Strip" (p.41)

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Appendix C: Partial Listing of American Jewish Peace Organizations

Name and Organizational Information	Mission	Activities/Focus
American Jews for a Just Peace http://www.ajjp.org/ American Jews for a Just Peace (AJJP) was founded in Boston in September, 2008. It is an alliance of activists in the United States working to ensure equal rights, safety, and dignity for all the people of historic Palestine. AJJP operates as an alliance of autonomous chapters and individual members across the United States. AJJP is a grassroots, membership-driven network with the goal of coordinating our collective work under a shared name and agreed statement of Common Ground principles.	AJJP is committed to a peaceful and just resolution of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, a resolution that will provide justice, safety, security and freedom for Jews, Palestinians, and all others living in the region. We are not committed to a specific solution, but are strongly committed to the principles of international law and human rights, and to the conviction that every state must be a state of and for all its citizens. We believe that the illegal occupation of the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem must end immediately, and that a just peace requires the international community to honor the national aspirations and human rights of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian Territories, within Israel, and in the Diaspora, as defined by international law and recognized principles of human rights. We recognize the powerful role of U.S. policy in the region and believe that America's unconditional support of Israeli government policy is profoundly harmful to the cause of peace with justice. We will work to combat the myth of American Jewish consensus in support of Israeli government policy. We will work to promote a U.S. policy that is consistent with international law and human rights. *We therefore advocate for:* 1. The rights of Israelis and Palestinians to collective sovereignty within a political entity or entities of their own choosing, including full equality, civil rights and economic justice for all; 2. An immediate end to the Israeli government's military occupation of and land expropriation in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, and an immediate end to preferential treatment of Jews over Palestinians; 3. Removal of the wall Israel is erecting inside the West Bank and East Jerusalem in violation of international law; # Removal of settlements, and of the occupation infrastructure in the West Bank and East Jerusalem which violate the Geneva Conventions; 4. An immediate end to collective punishment (banned under international law) and human rights violations, including assassinations, military strikes on civilian areas, demolition of homes, arbitrary arrests, torture, the closure and encirclement of	Members of American Jews for a Just Peace (AJJP) are involved in many projects that are focused on achieving a just peace in Israel/Palestine. In most of these, we work closely with other activists, both in the U.S. and abroad. Projects: - Trees of Reconciliation - Health and Human Rights Project - Anti-Apartheid Working Group - Gaza Working Group - ICAHD (Israeli Committee Against Home Demolitions) Partnership

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	villages and communities; and an end to travel restrictions, the uprooting of trees, and denial of access to education and medical care in the region; 5. Call for Israel to acknowledge its responsibility for the displacement and dispossession of the Palestinian people and their descendants since 1948, including those internally displaced in Israel/Palestine, and to recognize the right of those refugees to return to their homelands or be compensated for their losses; 6. An end to the siege and blockade of Gaza; 7. A just and equitable solution to the question of Jerusalem, which includes universal and unhampered access to all holy sites and protects the political and economic rights of Israelis and Palestinians; 8. A just and equitable resolution to the plight of Palestinian refugees that recognizes the right of return as guaranteed by international law and United Nations resolutions; 9. Freedom from violence for all people of the Middle East; we condemn all acts of aggression, intimidation and violence against civilians, whether perpetrated by governments, private groups or individuals; 10. Just and equitable distribution of critical natural resources, especially water; 11. Cessation of U.S. aid to Israel until Israel ends its occupation and land expropriation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem and achieves a just peace.	
Americans for Peace Now http://www.peacenow.org/ Americans for Peace Now [APN] was founded in 1981 to support the activities of Shalom Achshav (Peace Now in Israel). APN is the leading United States advocate for peace in the Middle East. APN's mission is to help Israel and the Shalom Achshav movement to achieve a comprehensive political settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict consistent with Israel's long-term security needs and its Jewish and democratic values. Has some regional offices around the	APN strives to meet the following goals in order to fulfill its mission: 1. An American Jewish community and general American public educated about the strategic and economic benefits of security through peace in the Middle East. 2. Active White House and State Department engagement in the peace process, especially Administration efforts to broker a new interim understanding between Israelis and Palestinians, facilitate final status arrangements that reconcile Israeli security with Palestinian statehood, and encourage negotiations between Israel, Syria, and Lebanon. 3. Congressional support for the peace process through continued aid to Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and the Palestinians. 4. Broad awareness in the United States of the benefits of Shalom	APN has a wide array of educational programs that reach out to communities around the country, and is a powerful force for mobilizing grassroots support among U.S. citizens. By demonstrating this support, and by working directly with decision makers and government officials, APN promotes U.S. policies that further the peace process. Finally, APN provides critical financial support to the work of Shalom Achshav in Israel.

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country	Achshav programs in Israel. 5. A firm financial base for Shalom Achshav and APN activities.	
Birthright Unplugged http://www.birthrightunplugged.org/ Founded in 2003 by an Iraqi American woman of Jewish and Muslim descent, and an American Jewish woman. While this organization does not consider itself part of the Jewish peace movement, but rather of the Palestinian solidarity movement, its trips are geared towards (though not limited to) Jews. Not a membership organization	We reject the notion of a "birthright," as embodied in Jewish-only fully-funded trips to Israel. Israel has ignored the internationally recognized right of return for refugees, but has created a "Law of Return" which extends citizenship benefits to any person of Jewish heritage, excluding millions of Palestinians born in the land that has become Israel. Our programs attempt to address this injustice by facilitating access typically denied to the communities with whom we work. Jewish people often face obstacles of fear and lack of knowledge which can deter them from pursuing this kind of experience on their own. Palestinian people face movement restrictions and other human rights violations which limit their ability to visit places we travel to during our trip.	Birthright Unplugged offers opportunities for people to gain knowledge through first-hand experiences and to use that knowledge to make positive change in the world.
Brit Tzedek v'Shalom http://btvshalom.org Membership: Jewish Only 39 chapters around the country Merged with J Street January 1, 2010	The mission of Brit Tzedek v'Shalom, the Jewish Alliance for Justice and Peace is to educate and mobilize American Jews in support of a negotiated two-state resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.	The organization engages in educational, advocacy and lobbying activities
Israel Policy Forum http://www.israelpolicyforum.org Founded in 1993 in the wake of the Oslo Accords, Israel Policy Forum (IPF) has grown to become the most important independent, mainstream organization dedicated to mobilizing American Jews in support of sustained U.S. diplomatic efforts in the Middle East. IPF is increasingly recognized as a central clearinghouse for policymakers seeking to more effectively engage the United States in the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Not a membership organization	Israel Policy Forum (IPF) advocates for active and sustained American diplomatic efforts, which are essential to achieving a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Israel Policy Forum believes that through a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Israel and its Arab neighbors, as well as the region as a whole, will become more secure, prosperous and stable. IPF also sees such a resolution as critical to garnering the international support necessary to effectively wage war on terror and to increase global security. To achieve this goal - and strengthen its interests in the region - the United States must remain a consistent and fully engaged partner in the Middle East peace process. IPF is doing everything possible to encourage and support America in this effort.	Education and advocacy of policy positions Meetings and correspondence with U.S. and foreign heads of state, policymakers and opinion leaders; o Community fact-finding missions to the Middle East; o Educational briefings throughout the country with scholars and policymakers from the Middle East and United States o Conference call briefings led by IPF's national scholars featuring scholars, journalists, and policymakers from the region; o IPF's weekly publications, *IPF Friday* and *IPF Focus*, which are widely distributed throughout the U.S. and Mideast,and are read by some of the key leaders on Capitol Hill;

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		  o Mobilizing the Jewish community in support of active U.S. peacemaking efforts in the region.
www.itisapartheid.org ITISAPARTHEID.ORG is a grass roots effort made up of activists, students, academics, young people, older people, Jews, Christians, Muslims, Palestinians and Israelis. We have no budget to speak of -- we put money in the pot when we need it. We invite you to join the campaign, start a group in your town, or put up a sign or banner.	The purpose of the ITISAPARTHEID.ORG web site is to use the **tools of the internet** and our own **ingenuity** to spread the word about apartheid in the Israeli Occupied Territories. This is sometimes referred to as Viral Marketing or a Guerrilla Marketing campaign by web savvy people. Our facts are meticulously researched and can be a tool for helping to change how people think about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Since the media by and large ignore or are afraid to print the truth, it is our job to get the word out in other ways.	Instead of a big advertising budget we rely on our own inventiveness, creativity, social networking and public displays of the phrase ITISAPARTHEID.ORG to spread the word about the web site and apartheid in the Israeli occupied territories. When people see the phrase ITISAPARTHEID.ORG multiple times, it will start to challenge the way people think about the conflict and some will come to the web site for more information. **We want you to put the phraseITISAPARTHEID.ORG everywhere:** put a bumper sticker on your car, or hang it on a banner. Use the tools of the internet to spread the word: blog about the site, or link the site to your Facebook page.
Jewish Voices for Peace **http://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org** JVP formed in September, 1996 by Julia Caplan, Julie Iny, and Rachel Eisner in response to the provocative opening by the Netanyahu government of an archaeological tunnel under Jerusalem's Temple Mount that led to confrontations in which 65 Palestinians and 14 Israelis were killed. Membership: Jewish only, with wide spectrum of ideological diversity Has chapters around the country	Jewish Voice for Peace is a diverse and democratic community of activists inspired by Jewish tradition to work together for peace, social justice, and human rights. We support the aspirations of Israelis and Palestinians for security and self-determination. We seek: • A U.S. foreign policy based on promoting peace, democracy, human rights, and respect for international law • An end to the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem • A resolution of the Palestinian refugee problem consistent with international law and equity • An end to all violence against civilians • Peace among the peoples of the Middle East	JVP supports peace activists in Palestine and Israel, and works in broad coalition with other Jewish, Arab-American, faith-based, peace and social justice organizations.
J Street **http://www.jstreet.org/** J Street was founded to promote meaningful American leadership to end	J Street represents Americans, primarily but not exclusively Jewish, who support Israel and its desire for security as the Jewish homeland, as well as the right of the Palestinians to a sovereign state of their own - two states living side-by-side in peace and security. We believe ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is in the best interests of Israel, the United	J Street will advocate forcefully in the policy process, in Congress, in the media, and in the Jewish community to make sure public officials and community leaders clearly see the depth and breadth of support for our views

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the Arab-Israeli and Palestinian-Israel conflicts peacefully and diplomatically. We support a new direction for American policy in the Middle East and a broad public and policy debate about the U.S. role in the region. J Street is itself a 501(c)(4) organization and is part of the J Street family of organizations, which includes an independent, legally unconnected Political Action Committee, JStreetPAC.	States, the Palestinians, and the region as a whole. J Street supports diplomatic solutions over military ones, including in Iran; multilateral over unilateral approaches to conflict resolution; and dialogue over confrontation with a wide range of countries and actors when conflicts do arise.	on Middle East policy among voters and supporters in their states and districts. We seek to complement the work of existing organizations and individuals that share our agenda. In our lobbying and advocacy efforts, we will enlist individual supporters of other efforts as partners.
Tikkun/ Network for Spiritual Progressives **www.tikkun.org** Although our organization will speak at times in the name of the best in the Jewish tradition, we will also honor all major spiritual traditions represented in our membership. We are a multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-spiritual community--and we believe that there are many paths to spiritual truth, and we want to honor all of those which are open to an Emancipatory Spirituality as presented in TIKKUN. So we draw upon the richness of Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, spiritual truths from indigenous peoples and from the often ignored spiritual wisdom of women. Has chapters around the country	We are a community of people from many faiths and traditions, called together by TIKKUN magazine and its vision of healing and transforming our world. We include in this call both the outer transformation needed to achieve social justice, ecological sanity, and world peace, and the inner healing needed to foster loving relationships, a generous attitude toward the world and toward others unimpeded by the distortions of our egos. Our movement will encourage a habit of generosity and trust, and the ability to respond to the grandeur of creation with awe, wonder and radical amazement. Based on the following principles: 1. INTERDEPENDENCE AND ECOLOGICAL SANITY 2. A NEW BOTTOM LINE IN OUR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS 3. SUPPORTING THE STRUGGLES FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND PEACE 4. PEACE, JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION FOR ISRAEL AND PALESTINE 5. A SPIRITUAL MOVEMENT	We especially encourage the creation and strengthening of truly transnational grassroots movements focused not only on resisting corporate globalism but on creating a new democratic "globalization"—a planetary movement that is not controlled either by national governments or by corporations. We especially support efforts to require that corporations serve the public good such as the proposed Social Responsibility Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

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Appendix D: Partial Listing of Arab American Organizations

Name and Organizational information	Mission	Activities/Focus
Arab American Institute http://www.aaiusa.org/ Established in 1985 and based in Washington, DC, the Arab American Institute (AAI) is a non-profit nonpartisan national leadership organization. AAI was created to nurture and encourage the direct participation of Arab Americans in political and civic life in the United States.	The Arab American Institute (AAI) represents the policy and community interests of Arab Americans throughout the United States and strives to promote Arab American participation in the U.S. electoral system. AAI focuses on two areas: campaigns and elections and policy formation and research. The Institute strives to serve as a central resource to government officials, the media, political leaders and community groups and a variety of public policy issues that concern Arab Americans and U.S. – Arab relations.	As the only national organization that promotes Arab American participation in the U.S. electoral system, AAI has developed a host of services, from voter education to liaison with the national parties, to support the community's activities. We are also the leading policy and research organization on domestic and policy concerns of Arab Americans. Through ongoing meetings with members of the Administration and Congress, a variety of publications and issue briefs, media and direct member mobilization, AAI maintains a strong presence among policy makers who impact our issues.
Arab American Action Network http://www.aaan.org/ **(AAAN)** is a nonprofit, grassroots, community-based organization working to improve the social, economic and political conditions of Arab immigrants and Arab Americans in the Chicago metropolitan area	The Arab American Action Network (AAAN) strives to strengthen the Arab community in the Chicago area by building its capacity to be an active agent for positive social change. Our vision is for a strong Arab American community whose members have the power to make decisions about actions and policies that affect their lives and have access to a range of social, political, cultural and economic opportunities in a context of equity and social justice.	As a grassroots nonprofit, our strategies include community organizing, advocacy, education, providing social services, leadership development, cultural outreach and forging productive relationships with other communities. Program areas are: Family empowerment and youth programs offering a range of social, literacy and citizenship programs Youth programs Cultural outreach to raise awareness on issues pertaining to the Arab world and Arab Americans Community organizing and advocacy
Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee http://www.adc.org/index.php?id=124 ADC is a grassroots civil rights organization which welcomes people of all backgrounds, faiths and ethnicities as members. The ADC was founded in Washington, DC by U.S. Senator Jim Abourezk in 1980	The American-Arab Anti-discrimination committee (ADC) is a civil rights organization committed to defending the rights of people of Arab descent and promoting their rich cultural heritage.	Promotes cultural events and participates in community activities, in order to correct anti-Arab stereotypes and humanize the image of the Arab people, coordinating closely with other civil rights and human rights organizations on issues of common concern. Through its Department of Legal Services, ADC offers counseling in cases of discrimination and defamation and selected impact litigation in the areas of immigration.

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		To educate the public and maintain regular communication with its members, the Media & Publications Department issues a bi-monthly newsletter, ADC Times, Issue Papers and Special Reports, which study key issues of defamation and discrimination; community studies, legal, media and educational guides; and action alerts, which call on members to act on issues necessitating grassroots response. In the Department of Educational Programs of ADC, the Research Institute (ADCRI) publishes information on issues of concern to Arab Americans and sponsors ADC's Reaching the Teachers campaign, which aims at ensuring an accurate, objective and fair portrayal of Arab history and culture in schools. ADCRI also administers a year-round college internship program for Arab American students and others.
National Council on US-Arab Relations http://www.ncusar.org/about/about.html Founded in 1983, the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations is an American non-profit, non-governmental, educational organization dedicated to improving American knowledge and understanding of the Arab world.	The National Council's *vision* is a relationship between the United States and its Arab partners, friends, and allies that rests on as solid and enduring a foundation as possible. Such a foundation, viewed from both ends of the spectrum, is one that would be characterized by strengthened and expanded strategic, economic, political, commercial, and defense cooperation ties; increased joint ventures; a mutuality of benefit; reciprocal respect for each other's heritage and values; and overall acceptance of each other's legitimate needs, concerns, interests, and objectives. The National Council's *mission* is educational. It seeks to enhance American awareness, knowledge, and understanding of the Arab countries, the Mideast, and the Islamic world.	Has programs for leadership development, people-to-people exchanges, lectures, publications, an annual Arab-U.S. policymakers conference, and the participation of American students and faculty in Arab world study experiences. As a public service, the Council also serves as an information clearinghouse and participant in national, state, and local grassroots outreach to media, think tanks, and select community, civic, educational, religious, business, and professional associations. In these ways the Council helps strengthen and expand the overall Arab-U.S. relationship.
Middle East Studies Association (MESA) http://www.mesa.arizona.edu/	The Middle East Studies Association (MESA) is a non-political association that fosters the study of the Middle East, promotes high standards of scholarship and teaching, and encourages public understanding of the region and its peoples through programs, publications and services that enhance education, further intellectual exchange, recognize professional distinction, and defend academic	The Middle East Studies Association (MESA) is a private, non-profit, non-political learned society that brings together scholars, educators and those interested in the study of the region from all over the world. As part of its goal to advance learning, facilitate communication and promote cooperation, MESA sponsors an annual meeting that is a leading international forum for scholarship, intellectual

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| | freedom. | exchange and pedagogical innovation. It is responsible for the International Journal of Middle East Studies, the premiere journal on the region, the MESA Bulletin and a quarterly newsletter. An awards program recognizes scholarly achievement, service to the profession and exemplary student mentoring. MESA is governed by a nine-member Board of Directors elected by the membership. |

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Appendix E: Partial Listing of Palestinian Rights Groups/Organizations

Name and Organizational information	Mission	Activities/Focus
American Task Force on Palestine http://www.americantaskforce.org/ The American Task Force on Palestine (ATFP) is a a 501(c)(3) non-profit, non-partisan organization based in Washington, DC. ATFP's President and Founder is Dr. Ziad J. Asali, a retired physician with a long history of activism in Palestinian and Arab-American organizations. ATFP is strictly opposed to all acts of violence against civilians no matter the cause and no matter who the victims or perpetrators may be. The Task Force advocates the development of a Palestinian state that is democratic, pluralistic, non-militarized and neutral in armed conflicts.	ATFP is dedicated to advocating that it is in the American national interest to promote an end to the conflict in the Middle East through a negotiated agreement that provides for two states - Israel and Palestine - living side by side in peace and security. The Task Force was established in 2003 to provide an independent voice for Palestinian-Americans and their supporters and to promote peace. AFTP's Board of Directors is made up of a large group of noted Palestinian-Americans who agree with these principles.	ATFP works primarily in Washington, DC, and seeks to build strong working relationships with government departments and agencies, think tanks and NGOs and the media. It has developed lines of communication with the US, Palestinian, Israeli and Jordanian governments in order to pursue its policy advocacy goals. ATFP has also engaged in humanitarian fundraising to support health and education causes in the occupied Palestinian territories.
Boston Coalition for Palestinian Rights http://www.bcpr.net/	As people of conscience, working in solidarity with the Palestinian people, we, the Boston Coalition for Palestinian Rights (BCPR), are united by the belief that peace will only be possible when there is justice for the Palestinian people. A true peace will begin only when there is acknowledgement of the losses suffered by the Palestinian people and a recognition of their individual and collective rights. A just solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict necessitates an end to the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, including the evacuation of all Israeli settlements; self-determination for the Palestinian people; and the application of international laws and UN resolutions, including the Right of Return.	We sponsor rallies, teach-ins and media campaigns throughout the Boston area to educate people about the history of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the current Intifada. The Boston Coalition for Palestinian Rights has been a home for groups that take on special projects, such as the Boston to Palestine and the BootCAT groups, and collaborates closely with the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), Palestinian Right of Return Coalition, Trans-Arab Research Institute (TARI), Grassroots International, Friends of Sabeel, Alliance for a Secular and Democratic South Asia, Boston Committee on the Middle East (BCOME), Jewish Women for Justice in Israel/Palestine, as well as various other individuals and organizations
The Electronic Intifada http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article1387.shtml EI was launched on 23 February 2001 by four writers and activists: Ali Abunimah, Arjan El Fassed, Laurie King-Irani, and Nigel Parry. Two of our founders, Ali Abunimah and Arjan El Fassed, are Palestinians, Laurie King-Irani is American and Nigel Parry is Scottish. All four founders have lived in the Middle East for varying	The Electronic Intifada (EI) is a not-for-profit, independent publication committed to comprehensive public education on the question of Palestine, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the economic, political, legal, and human dimensions of Israel's 40-year occupation of Palestinian territories. EI provides a needed supplement to mainstream commercial media representations of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.	Launched 23 February 2001 at electronicIntifada.net as a pioneering online resource for media analysis, criticism, and activism, EI has progressively expanded its scope into new arenas: reference materials, live reporting, editorials, arts coverage, and satire, with the aim of presenting an accessible, credible, and responsible Palestinian narrative of developments on the ground to the American

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periods of time -- Palestine, Jordan, and Lebanon.		public and international community.
The Free Gaza Movement http://www.freegaza.org/ We are Italian, Irish, Canadian, Greek, Tunisian, German, Australian, American, English, Scottish, Danish, Israeli, and Palestinian. We are of all ages and backgrounds. We have years of experience volunteering in Gaza and the West Bank at the invitation of Palestinians. But now, because of the increasing stranglehold of Israel's illegal occupation of Palestine, many of us find it almost impossible to enter Gaza, and an increasing number have been refused entry to Israel and the West Bank as well.	We want to break the siege of Gaza. We want to raise international awareness about the prison-like closure of the Gaza Strip and pressure the international community to review its sanctions policy and end its support for continued Israeli occupation. We want to uphold Palestine's right to welcome internationals as visitors, human rights observers, humanitarian aid workers, journalists, or otherwise. We have not and will not ask for Israel's permission. It is our intent to overcome this brutal siege through civil resistance and non-violent direct action, and establish a permanent sea lane between Gaza and the rest of the world.	Since August 2008, the Free Gaza Movement has sailed from Cyprus to the Gaza Strip on several successful voyages, bringing in international witnesses to see firsthand the devastating effects of Israeli violence against the Palestinian people. Ours are the first international boats to journey to Gaza since 1967. Points of Unity All participants in the Free Gaza Movement accept the following principles and practices: 1. We respect the human rights of everyone, regardless of race, tribe, religion, ethnicity, nationality, citizenship or language. 2. The lawful inhabitants of all territories occupied by Israel since June 5, 1967 must have unimpeded access to international waters and air space, in conformity with all UN resolutions and international law. 3. The lawful inhabitants of all territories occupied by Israel since June 5, 1967 have the right to control all entry and exit to and from those territories without Israeli interference. 4. Israel must withdraw its military presence from all territories occupied since June 5, 1967 and revoke all legislation, regulations, directives and practices that apply differently to different populations living in those territories. 5. Israel must demolish all barriers built to restrict passage in all territories occupied by Israel since June 5, 1967. 6. We recognize the right of all Palestinian refugees and exiles and their heirs to return to their homes in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories; to recover their properties, and to receive compensation for damage, dispossession

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		and unlawful use of such property. This is an individual and not a collective right, and cannot be negotiated except by the individual. 7. We stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people, but support no particular political party or organization, without exception. 8. We agree to adhere to the principles of nonviolence and nonviolent resistance in word and deed at all times.
Institute for Middle East Understanding http://imeu.net/ The IMEU was founded in 2005 by a group of concerned Americans who want to foster an increased understanding among Americans about Palestine and the Palestinians. The IMEU is an independent organization and is not affiliated with any government or political party. It is funded through individual donations and foundations.	The Institute for Middle East Understanding (IMEU) is an independent non-profit organization that provides journalists with quick access to information about Palestine and the Palestinians, as well as expert sources, both in the United States and in the Middle East. Both through its website and its staff, the IMEU works with journalists to increase the public's understanding about the socio-economic, political and cultural aspects of Palestine, Palestinians and Palestinian Americans.	The IMEU assists journalists who are working on stories about Palestine or the Palestinians by: • Providing access to the latest news stories, expert analysis, photographs and other visuals • Maintaining an updated panel of credible experts and analysts who can comment publicly on the news, life and culture of Palestinians and Palestinian Americans. • Putting journalists in contact with Palestinian women and men from all walks of life - including artists, poets, businesspeople, medical professionals, policymakers and more - who are willing to be interviewed. • Compiling an extensive library of images, maps, studies, reports and polls relating to Palestine and the Palestinians • Providing a comprehensive set of answers to the most commonly asked questions about Palestine and the Palestinians • Supplying links to websites and other online materials that offer journalists a wide range of information on the Palestinian experience. The IMEU provides these links as a service to journalists but it does not necessarily endorse the views or opinions of the various sources.
US Campaign to End the Occupation http://www.endtheoccupation.org/	The US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation is based on human rights	The US Campaign focuses on US government, corporations, and other institutions that sustain

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The US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation is a diverse coalition working for freedom from occupation and equal rights for all by challenging U.S. policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.	and international law, providing a non-sectarian framework for everyone who supports its Call to Action. Its strategy is to inform, educate, and mobilize the public so as to change the U.S. role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to support peace, justice, human rights, and international law.	Israel's domination of the Palestinian people and denial of their human rights. These human rights include an end to the occupation of Palestinian land in the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem, full equality for Palestinian citizens of Israel, and the right of return for Palestinian refugees.
US Palestinian Community Network **http://palestineconference.org/wp/** The US Palestinian Community Network is a Palestinian community-based network that grew from the Palestinian Popular Conference that took place in Chicago on August 8-10, 2008, drawing 1000 members of the Palestinian community in the US together to empower our community, unify our voice, and affirm the right of Palestinians in the Shatat (exile) to participate fully in shaping our joint destiny. To contact the USPCN, please email us at conference@palestineconference.org.	The USPCN is anchored in the following objectives: • Self-determination and equality for the Palestinian people • The right of all Palestinian refugees to return to their original homes, lands, properties and villages (a natural right supported by international law and UN Resolution 194) • Ending Zionist occupation and colonization of Palestine	The USPCN is an arena where individuals and organizations come together to coordinate and refine strategies, link efforts, plan united actions, and inform one another and the community about their work on behalf of Palestine.

Alternative Media:
http://www.btselem.org/English/index.asp
http://www.counterpunch.org/
http://www.democracynow.org/
http://electronicintifada.net/
http://english.aljazeera.net/
http://www.haaretz.com/
http://www.ifamericansknew.org/
http://www.thenation.com/
http://www.therealnews.com/t2/index.php

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Appendix F: Dialogic Models
Intercultural Educational/Informational Models

Model	Participants	Goals of Encounter	Underlying assumptions or theories	Activities	Problems/Criticisms
Grassroots models, e.g., MERC (Hubbard, 1997, 1999), Living room dialogues (Davis, 2002; Sarsar, 2002; Halpern, 2006)	Only participants who are amenable to dialogue are invited	Inter-cultural awareness; getting to know the "other"; socializing; limited activism in some groups	Leaderless; theoretical backgrounds not clear, though inter-cultural model is implicit	Dialogue; writing consensus statements	Difficulties exploring or working with emotions; conflict avoidant
Contact Model (Khuri, 2004; Hurtado, 2005; Nagda, 2006; Nagda, Kim and Truelove, 2004; Nagda and Zuniga, 2003; Tropp and Bianchi, 2006; Tausch, Kenworthy, and Hewstone, 2006)	Often students in university settings; often focused on race relations; Small group work	Reduce bias; reduce prejudice and negative stereotyping; promote social inclusion	Contact Hypothesis	Weekly meetings over course of semester or part of semester; may include lecture, dialogue, or both; may be facilitated by peers or by teachers	Disregards political reality of asymmetric power relations; little long term impact, as long as external power structure remains; difficult to sustain conditions necessary for optimal contact; difficulty managing conflict or negative emotions; lack of correlation between personal and political/ national attitude change
Information/intercultural models (Ben Ari, 2004)	Not specified	Reduce inter-group prejudices by providing information	Inter-cultural perspective: prejudice is result of lack of information	Media or educational programs	Success requires participants to be receptive to the new information provided, whether by contact or other means
Meta-cognitive model (Ben Ari, 2004)	Can be implemented in each group separately	Reduce prejudice through attaining "meta-cognitive awareness" of cognitive processes underlying interpersonal and inter-group perceptions of out-group, e.g., categorization, differentiation, in-group out-group distinctions, and attribution	Raising awareness and teaching students how one's own and other cognitive systems operate will reduce prejudice; "thinking about thinking"	Training program involving verbal and audio-visual material, exercises, analyses of incidents, discussions and role playing; may serve as preparation for information or contact training	Impact of program is dependent upon participants' motivation, and pressure from social context to invest the necessary energy.

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Healing/Therapeutic Models

Model	Participants	Goals of Encounter	Underlying assumptions or theories	Activities	Challenges
Reconciliation-Transformation (Bargal, 2004)	Youth, school settings	Reduce cognitive distortions, anger, hostility and fear	Intra and inter-group dynamics Unclear structure therapeutic	Sharing of feelings; self-disclosure of trauma experiences	Expensive; lack of clarity about approach to larger societal structure
TRT (To Reflect and to Trust) (Albeck, Adwan, and Bar-On, 2002; Salomon, 2004; Bar-On, 2000; Steinberg, 2004; 2007)	Small groups, preferably equal numbers from both sides of conflict	Healing; develop relationships and testing of stereotypic views of the other; develop empathy and understanding of the other	Psychological working through of traumatic event; therapeutic orientation Inter-personal and psychological focus Emphasis on commonalities	Sharing of feelings and personal narratives	Bottom up process needs to be synchronized with top-down process; may be frustrating unless accompanied by larger structural change

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Political/Action Models

Model	Participants	Goals of Encounter	Underlying assumptions or theories	Activities	Problems/Criticisms
Interactive Problem-Solving (Kelman, 1999; Rouhana and Korper, 1997; Rouhana and Kelman, 1994; Cross and Rosenthal, 1999(Hicks & Weisberg, 2002))	Small groups of 3-6 participants, equal numbers from each side; plus 3-8 third party members; participants are representatives of their groups; political influentials Meet in 2 ½ day workshops	Build bridges across differences; develop Insight into each party's needs, fears, and concerns; Joint thinking about how mutually to meet these needs, fears, and concerns; Humanizing of the enemy; transfer of ideas into the political discourse	Theories of basic human needs and conflict resolution approaches (C-R); Non-official or non-binding nature may serve to overcome political, emotional and technical barriers faced by official negotiators	Workshop of several days' length in phases: 1) meet in single group 2) both groups meet together and share their communities needs and fears of not getting needs met; listen actively to other side 3) parties can ask questions of each other 4) discuss broad shape to problem by options that meets basic needs and addresses fears of both groups 5)identify constraints 6) identify ways to overcome constraints 7) optional action planning	Does not address issues of trauma which impacts on the conflict. Does not address responsibility each party has in perpetuating the conflict
Givat Haviva (Hansen, 2006) School of Peace Neve Shalom Wahat al Salaam (Abu Nimer, 2004; Halabi, 2004; Halabi and Sonnenschein, 2004)	14-16 participants; many programs for youth, ages 16-17	Empower minority and help majority get insight into their power orientation. Develop awareness of conflict and roles in it; enable participants to explore and construct their identities through interaction with the "other."	Inter-group emphasis, systems theories (Lewin); Martin Buber. Group is microcosm of larger environment; while there is inter-group emphasis, it is individual who undergoes change.	Meet in uninational and binational settings for open dialogue; training activities and games highlighting group identity, peace, and conflict for youth	Lack of personal relations may prevent participants from moving beyond rigid collective perspectives; promotes particular narrative and perspective over the other; Jewish participants tend to represent political left (rather than entire political spectrum)

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Hybrid Models

Model	Participants	Goals of Encounter	Underlying assumptions or theories	Activities	Problems/Criticisms
MACBE (Desivilya, 2004)	Small group of 20 adult participants ideal; for educators, mental health professionals, community workers and HR managers; can be adapted for other populations. Groups in conflict may meet separately or together	Improve inter-group relationships through behavior and attitude change by 1) imparting knowledge about the dynamics of the conflict 2) teaching constructive conflict management skills and 3) preparing participants to apply and implement those skills in their workplaces or communities	Hybrid approach: attempt to link systems thinking with Conflict Resolution theories (e.g., interactive problem solving approach)	Educational and experiential components such as exercises, simulations and role plays; conflict resolution curriculum; cooperative learning and constructive controversy; specialized programs like negotiation and mediation training	Need ample resources, cooperation of local communities, and patience of program initiators and participants
TAMRA model(Babbitt and Steiner, 2006)	20 adults	1)To train teams of Jewish-Arab facilitators to work with community 2) develop empathy	Hybrid approach: C-R interactive problem solving + narrative story-telling+ Consensus Building Institute Model	3 four day sessions, which may be used in modular form: 1) problem solving workshop; 2) teaching facilitation and consensus building skills (developed by Susskind) 3) TRT narrative sessions: sharing personal experiences	Works with relatively small groups of people; method has not been evaluated
Dignity Model (Hicks, 2007, 2008)	Small groups up to 30. Has been used in various age categories	Education; healing	Evolutionary psychology; underlying every human interaction is a "primal desire for dignity"	Educational (lecture about evolutionary psychology) and restorative/healing	Works with relatively small groups of people; method has not been evaluated
Besod Siach (Duek, 2001; Sarel, et. al., 2003)	Between 20-60 participants per conference; all levels of leadership, formal and informal; equal participation	Create a space where differences can be held and contained, and narratives can co-exist; learn about own identity through interaction with the other	Psychoanalytic and open systems theories; work of Wilfred Bion; philosophy of Martin Buber; Intra-and inter-group work	Small group work in like identity and mixed groups; large group meetings; inter-group event; application events; examine covert and unconscious processes in groups, as they occur	Conferences require a large number of staff; method has not been evaluated

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APPENDIX G
Roles and Responsibilities of Project Partners

Project Details
- The primary task of *Authority, Leadership and Peacemaking: The Role of the Diasporas* is to promote dialogue between the Jewish, Palestinian, and Arab Diasporas and affected others around the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; to learn about unconscious processes and group dynamics and how they affect the conflict; explore identity issues in relation to the other.
- The event will take place April 15-18, 2010 at the Connors Family Retreat Center in Dover, MA (staff work begins April 13)
- The event will use group relations conference methodology, with innovations of Besod Siach, and some added design elements. (e.g., that there be equal numbers of Jewish and Palestinian/Arab staff, and that we aim for that in the membership as well).
- This is a pilot project requiring flexibility in order to work with a changing context. We will aim to pilot the conference with 20 participants and 6 staff. At the same time we need to be prepared to grow if there is great interest (up to 50 members) and to design a smaller project for as few as 11 members.

Tracy Wallach assumes the role of Conference Creator, Primary Sponsor and Principal Investigator. This includes taking primary responsibility for:
- Negotiating additional sponsorships
- Hiring and authorizing the directors
- Raising funds
- Marketing and recruiting for the conference
- Oversight and final approval of conference brochure
- Oversight and final approval of the budget
- Making final decisions (in consultation with conference director/s) about potential cancelation.
- Assuming all financial risk for this project, responsibility for making payments
- Assuming all responsibility and liability for the research she conducts during and after the conference.
- Drafting reports for grantors
- Making research results available to interested parties
- Sharing information about use of fundraising widgets
- Observing public events and staff work throughout the conference, as well as before and after. This includes email staff work. Observe other conference events in consultation with director (and permission of participants). Sharing of observations with staff and/or members will be negotiated and agreed upon with conference director/s

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Conference director/s commit to:
- Directing the conference within the parameters outlined above (theme, primary task, title, research), and in accordance with established professional and ethical standards
- Hiring and authorizing consulting staff (with equal numbers Jewish and Arab/Palestinian staff)
- Directing an event with as few as 11 and as many as 50 participants
- Develop conference design (Directors will strongly consider added design element of single identity dialogue groups as well as mixed identity groups)
- Prepare a balanced budget priced reasonably for members and submit to project director for final approval
- Developing and designing conference brochure and application for members in conjunction with graphic designer Onix Marrero and submit to project director for final approval
- Help with marketing and recruiting efforts (including forwarding fundraising widget to contacts, and posting of link to conference website/widget on website)
- Assuming responsibility of accepting /declining any member's application to attend, and determining how to distribute any financial aid / scholarship funds
- Complete surveys/and or interviews with Tracy Wallach following the conference (a consent form will be provided for interviews)

Conference Staff commit to:
- Taking up consulting roles in accordance with established professional and ethical standards
- Help with marketing and recruiting efforts (including forwarding fundraising widget to contacts, and posting of link to conference website/widget on website)
- Complete confidential surveys/and or interviews with Tracy Wallach following the conference (a consent form will be provided for interviews)

AKRI commits to:
- Use of its name and mission/description on marketing materials
- Helping to market the conference (including forwarding fundraising widget to contacts, and posting of link to conference website/widget on website)
- Providing insurance coverage for the conference site

Besod Siach commits to:
- Use of Besod Siach's innovations on group relations conference methodology
- Use of its name and mission/description on marketing materials
- Helping to market the conference (including forwarding fundraising widget to contacts, and posting of link to conference website/widget on website)

Sponsor 3 commits to:
- Donating $1000 to be used towards plane ticket for (conference co-director)

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- Use of its name and mission/description on marketing materials
- Helping to market the conference (including forwarding fundraising widget to contacts, and posting of link to conference website/widget on website)

Sponsor 4 will assume the role of fiscal sponsor. It will serve as the 501c3 organization in order to collect grant monies. Any grant funding collected will be sent to ALP Project account, minus a 10% administrative fee.

Sponsor 5 commits to:
- Use of its name and mission/description on marketing materials
- Helping to market the conference (including forwarding fundraising widget to contacts, and posting of link to conference website/widget on website)

Sponsor 6:
- use of PCOD's name and mission / description on marketing materials
- helping to market the conference (including forwarding fundraising widget to contacts, and posting of link to conference website/widget on website)
- helping with local pre and/or post conference application events
- potentially helping with pre-conference logistics in other concrete ways, as specific requests emerge.

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APPENDIX H: Brochure Text

Conference Purpose

Authority and Leadership
Working in groups of any size is rarely easy. Despite our best efforts to be focused, calm and clear, we often find ourselves struggling with authority, and facing ambiguous tasks, disputed roles, and unclear boundaries. These boundaries may be the personal space between two people or a wall between two peoples. In large part, this is because so much of what happens in groups, large and small, happens beneath the surface. In the workplace, in families, in communities, and in nations, there are dynamics that we do not fully comprehend or sometimes even see. As a result of these unspoken, misunderstood or hidden dynamics, groups can repeatedly stumble on otherwise simple decisions and make problems seem intractable. The ability to understand and then manage these dynamics is an indispensable aspect of effective leadership.

Israelis and Palestinians
The unresolved conflict between Israelis and Palestinians has plagued the Middle East region and beyond for decades. Beginning with the Oslo peace process in the early nineties, oscillation between hope and despair has become, unfortunately, one of the most compelling facts in the minds of both collectives. The shadows of hope have faded in the face of extremism, enmity and destruction. The second Lebanon war and the recent war in Gaza have demonstrated sharply and painfully the fragility of the peace process. Many on both sides of the conflict feel that the possibility of moving toward a mutual and accepted resolution has plunged to its lowest point.

Diaspora communities
Along with residents in the Middle East, people throughout Europe, Asia, and especially the US, actively share interests and concerns regarding the conflict and the fledgling peace process. While the nature and intensity of media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict varies immensely between Europe, the Middle East and the US, the picture in the mind of many, if not most, is that the "road map" of the peace process is leading to nowhere.
The emotional and physical traumas of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have an impact not only on those living in the midst of the turmoil in the region, but also on Diaspora communities. These traumas fuel the cycle of violence while reinforcing the anxieties and fears that each side has of the other. Some of the most contentious issues—the right of return, the future of Jerusalem, the separation wall, settlement activity and citizenship rights—are intensely debated within and between both communities. Research suggests that Diaspora communities have played a role in exacerbating the conflict, but may also play a role in peacemaking. In the United States, the role of American Palestinians and American Jews has not been adequately explored, particularly in relation to conflict resolution and peacemaking.

Primary Task
The primary task of the conference is **to learn – through experience – how groups function, how we exercise leadership in groups, and how we can become more effective leaders** within the organizations and communities in which we live and work. Uniquely, we will have the opportunity to focus on those elements of leadership that can often be obscured from view – the hidden challenges.

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A Systems Learning Model
While intellectual learning about the dynamics of conflict is available in many different forums, this conference is a rare enterprise that gives its members the opportunity to learn from experience.

The conference design is rooted in a unique experiential learning method known as a group relations conference or the Tavistock method. It is a dynamic experiential learning laboratory. As staff and participants, we co-create a temporary institution that allows for opportunities to study the obvious and not-so-obvious dynamics of organizational and community life. By keeping certain factors constant (task, role, time, and place) while observing others that emerge in the "here and now," both staff and conference members become participant–observers. We are in the process of co-creating an institution or community, at the same time that we are studying the impact on our own and others' behavior as all of this is happening. Throughout the process, consultants provide observations that promote awareness of emerging issues and themes regarding leadership, authority, task, role and boundaries.

As members of different generational, ethnic and religious identity groups, staff and conference members bring into the conference setting the range of perspectives, beliefs, values, and attitudes of those identity groups towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In this way, the temporary organization mirrors the patterns and relationships in our outside lives. By examining our beliefs, perspectives and behaviors within the conference setting, we will gain insight into the broader socio-political dynamics, and our own place in them.
In summary, through the conference experience, there will be an opportunity to:

- Better understand how leadership and authority emerges and is taken up in groups.

- Work across boundaries of identity and difference between individuals, groups, and communities.

- Better understand individual and collective roles in groups.

- Develop an awareness of the more hidden or covert dynamics in groups in general, and in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular.

- Explore the emotional impact of the conflict on a personal and communal level.

- Consider possibilities for contributing to the transformation of conflicts and the process of peace-making,

The conference will be directed by XXXXX, a Palestinian citizen and resident of Israel and XXXXX, a Jewish citizen and resident of the US. By itself, the co-directorship of the conference reflects and represents the dynamics of authority, leadership, and peace-making.

Our Commitment
We will reflect on what is learned, make it more personal, and **connect the experience to our lives outside the conference**. It is our desire that through this experience we will find new ways to lead, and learn how to transform our corners of the world. It is also our explicit desire that this

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conference will provide an opportunity for personal and communal transformation in addressing the conflict.

Continuing Education Credits for Social Workers

The program has been approved for 17.5 Approved Entity Continuing Education hours for re-licensure, in accordance with 258 CMR. Collaborative of NASW and the Boston College and Simmons Schools of Social Work Authorization numberD41604b.

Conference Structure

The conference has different kinds of small and large group events, each having a different task and different vantage point for the examination of group and organizational dynamics that are integrated by the continuing overall focus on the problems encountered in the exercise of authority within and between groups

The conference will begin promptly at 2:00 PM on Friday, April 16, 2010 (registration begins at 1:00 PM) and will end at 4:30 PM on Sunday, April 18th. Working sessions will last well into the evening on Friday and Saturday. Please plan accordingly. (All meals are provided on site).

Please note the change in the starting date!

Conference Research and Evaluation
All participants will be asked to complete a pre-conference survey, a post-conference evaluation immediately following the conference, and surveys 1, 3, 6, and 12 months after the conference. These online surveys are confidential and for the purpose of understanding:

- the impact of the conference on participants' learning about the conflict in the short and longer term

- the role group relations conference work may play in facilitating dialogue between Jewish and Arab Diaspora communities

A select number of participants will be invited to participate in a series of interviews to explore how they make meaning of their conference experience.

Those who wish to participate in the interview portion of the research will be given a consent form acknowledging their agreement to participate in the evaluation research of the conference. Anyone who thinks they might be interested is kindly requested to check the appropriate box on the registration form.

Your acceptance as a member of this conference will not be affected in any way by your willingness or unwillingness to participate in any portion of the evaluation research. You may withdraw your participation at any time.

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APPENDIX I

Pre-Conference Survey (for all participants)
Ethnicity:
Religion:

1.   How did you find out about this conference?

2.   What are your goals in attending this conference?

3.   What, if any, previous experiences have you had in group relations conferences?
4.   What, if any, previous experiences have you had in Jewish/Arab dialogue work?
5.   How would you rate your knowledge/understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
         1   2   3   4   5

6.   How familiar are you with the Israeli narrative of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
         1   2   3   4   5

7.   How familiar are you with the Palestinian narrative of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
         1   2   3   4   5

8.   How would you define your (political) beliefs vis a vis the conflict?
9.   What about the conference appealed to you?

10.   What do you hope to get out of attending this conference?

11.   What are your concerns about attending this conference?

12.   Please describe your involvement (social, professional, political) with (the other identity group) before this conference?

13.   Please describe your involvement (social, professional, political) with your own community/identity group before this conference?

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APPENDIX J

Schedule

	Friday		**Saturday**		**Sunday**
		7:45 - 8:45	Breakfast	7:45 - 8:45	Breakfast
		9:00 - 10:15	**Study Group**	**9:00 - 10:15**	**Study Group**
		10:15 - 10:30	Break	10:15 - 10:30	Break
		10:30 - 12:30	**Institutional Event Opening**	**10:30 - 11:30**	**Institutional Event**
		12:30 - 1:30	Lunch	**11:30 - 12:30**	**Institutional Event Closing**
		1:30 - 2:45	**Institutional Event**	12:30 - 1:15	Lunch
1:00 - 2:00	Registration	2:45 - 3:00	Break	**1:15 - 2:15**	**Review and Application Group**
2:00 - 3:00	**Opening Plenary**	**3:00 - 4:00**	**Study Group**	2:15 - 2:30	Break
3:00 - 3:15	Break	4:00 – 4:15	Break	**2:30 - 3:30**	**Closing Plenary**
3:15 - 4:30	**Study Group**	**4:15 - 5:30**	**Institutional Event**		
4:30 - 5:00	Break	5:30 - 5:45	Break		
5:00 - 6:15	**Study Group**	**5:45 - 7:00**	**Institutional Event**		
6:15 - 7:30	Break/Dinner	7:00 - 8:00	Dinner		
7:30 - 8:30	**Review and Application Group**	**8:00 - 9:00**	**Conference Discussion**		

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Conference Events

The conference has different kinds of events, each having a different task and different vantage points for the examination of individual, group and organizational dynamics. These different events are integrated by the continuing overall focus on the problems encountered in the exercise of authority and leadership within and between groups. The events are described below:

Conference Opening and Closing: These sessions provide an opportunity for members and staff to express their thoughts and feelings on crossing the boundaries from the outside environment into the conference and from within the conference to the outside environment.

Study Groups: The task is to study processes as they occur – in the "here-and-now" -- in this face-to-face group with special reference to the exercise of authority and the emergence of leadership. The group is assigned two consultants to assist with its task.

Institutional Event: In this event, members will have the opportunity to form their own sub-systems, and negotiate their mission in relation to the institution. The primary task is to explore the relationship between the sub-systems and the conference-as-a-whole in the "here-and-now."

Review and Application Groups: The task of these events are to provide members the opportunity to examine and discuss unresolved conference issues, reflect upon experiences and learning during the various conference events, and consider application of conference learning to home institutions.

Conference Discussion: The task of this event is to provide the opportunity for all conference participants to reflect on conference issues, experiences and learning during the various conference events.

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APPENDIX K

Conference Opening

Good afternoon. Welcome to the working conference Authority, Leadership, and Peace-Making: The role of the Diasporas. I am (director 1) and seated next to me is (director 2). We are the directors and consultants of this conference. We have been authorized in these roles by Tracy Wallach, the project creator. Tracy served as pre-conference administrator and will also be present in the role of researcher, which she will speak more about in a few minutes.

The primary task of this conference is to learn—through experience—how groups function, how we exercise leadership and groups, and how we can become more effective leaders within the organizations and communities in which we live and work. Uniquely, we will have the opportunity to focus on those dynamics that can often be obscured or hidden from view. This task is taken up in the context of working to understand the role of the US Jewish, Arab, and Palestinian Diaspora communities in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

There have been many changes to the staff over the course of the development of the conference. The administrator (name of administrator) and consultant (name of consultant) are both unable to participate for medical reasons. In addition, the five other members of the consulting staff have shifted roles, and are now here as members. It was the decision of the management, with the concurrence of these consultants, who have been present and working with us for the past two days, to hold the conference with this configuration. We believe that these shifts in roles, the processes by which the decisions were made, and issues related to the size and composition of the membership in general, deserve to be studied in relation to the theme and primary task of the conference. As we mentioned earlier, Tracy Wallach will be in the role

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of researcher during the course of the conference. We will turn to Tracy to say a few words about

her research.

(I briefly spell out that the research is in relationship to my doctoral dissertation, that I will be

observing all events in the conference, and direct their attention to their folders, in which they

will find the disclosure form)

Thank you Tracy.

A few words on authority and leadership…our primary way of providing the opportunity

for you to learn at this conference is to provide opportunities to study your behavior, as

individuals, as a group, and as a whole system, in real time, what we call the "here-and-now,"

with special attention to the exercise of authority and the emergence of leadership.

Authority: When a person goes before those in formal authority, such as a judge, or a

local elected council, the configuration of the room and the comportment of the authority figures,

even the attire, are in part a way to place an emphasis on the role, the task, boundaries, and the

nature of authority.

The purpose of this conference design, our demeanor, and the differing room

configurations, now and to follow, are in part the same: too mirror, and even at times amplify

those concepts.

As staff, we gain our authority through contractual delegation from the sponsoring

institutions. You confer authority on us by agreeing to be members. In terms of authority

relations, so long as you remain present, you affirm our authority to conduct this conference

within the boundaries of the manner outlined in the materials you have received. This statement

is in no way an indication that you as members do not have authority. Quite the contrary. Each

individual present carries with him or her, personal authority. In the language of this experience,

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everyone has the right to work. Everyone can embrace opportunities to explore and learn what happens when you seek, avoid, have thrust upon you or taken from you the formal and often informal authority of the group.

Leadership: in this conference, we will also be examining leadership. And we see leadership as a function of the group. Rather than thinking about leadership as a set of talents or traits that a person possesses and can bring forth, in this approach, leadership emerges based on the needs of the group. As a consequence, leadership is extremely fluid, and will change based on the groups' perception of its needs.

Our collective work is to learn who emerges in leadership, when and how, and for what purpose. How do our valences—the more typical ways we respond in groups—play into who emerges in leadership? How do the perceived characteristics of identity—religious and ethnic, yes, and also race, age, gender, sexual orientation, language, education, ability, etc., affect who leads and who follows? To this end, we will also, at different times throughout the experience, reflect with you on what is learned, and work with you to connect the experience to your lives outside the conference.

Finally, I would remind you that this is an opportunity for learning. We, the staff are not creating this institution for you. We are co-creating this institution with all that we bring. The directorate, as consultants to the process, will give primary focus to the group. In the "here-and-now" events, we will be directing our comments not as much to individual behavior, but to what we believe the group is doing as the group is doing it. We recognize this experience may be quite different from how you are accustomed to seeing instructors or consultants behave in learning environments. It is our experience that this style of consultation allows for the group dynamics

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that are often present, just below the surface in any group, to emerge most clearly for our

collective study and learning.

Please also know that our focus on the group does not mean we do not recognize that

every person here is an individual bringing your own particular experiences to the process. We

simply wish to stress that our goal is to explore authority and leadership in groups.

This conference provides tremendous freedom for exploration.

Recognizing what we create here-and-now in this experience is our own doing, The only

real task of members is to learn. There is no prescribed agenda more than that. There is no

required outcome. Through study groups, plenaries, an institutional event, and reflection

sessions, there will be abundant opportunities to learn about groups and to learn about ourselves.

What may be most important is that you examine the choices you make in relation to

Authority, leadership, especially as it relates to peace-making and the role of the Diasporas.

Thank you. Who would like to start?

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APPENDIX L

Disclosure form

<div align="center">

Conference Research and Evaluation

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The conference will be evaluated by Tracy Wallach MSW, who has worked as a clinical social worker and organizational and leadership consultant and is a doctoral candidate at Lesley University. The purpose of the evaluation research is to understand:

- the impact of the conference on participants' learning about the conflict in the short and longer term
- the role group relations conference work may play in facilitating dialogue between Jewish and Arab Diaspora communities

Findings from the evaluation research will be submitted as part of Tracy Wallach's doctoral dissertation. It may also be published in professional or academic journals. Please note that this is an evaluation of the *program* and not of any individual. No identifying information will be included in any of these reports. The report of this study will be available for all participants, upon request.

The research will be comprised of three parts: observation during the conference itself, surveys and interviews. Tracy Wallach will be present during conference events and will be taking notes on her observations on a laptop or by hand.

All participants will be asked to complete a pre-conference survey, a post-conference evaluation immediately following the conference, and surveys 1, 3, 6, and 12 months after the conference.

A select number of participants will be invited to participate in a series of interviews to explore how they make meaning of their conference experience.

Those who wish to participate in the interview portion of the research will be given a consent form acknowledging their agreement to participate in the evaluation research of the conference. Anyone who thinks they might be interested in being interviewed at 1, 3, 6, and 12 months following the conference, is kindly requested to sign the form enclosed in this packet and returning it to Tracy Wallach before the end of the conference.

Your participation in the survey and interview portion of the evaluation research is completely voluntary. You may withdraw your participation at any time.

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APPENDIX M

Institutional Event Opening

Good Morning. This is the opening session of the Institutional Event. We are here in our role as Directors of the conference and members of the management team of this event.

The Task of the IE is to provide an opportunity to experience and study relationships between groups and to explore and discover the "character" of this emerging temporary institution. It is also an opportunity to study how boundaries of time, territory, task and resources are managed and used in order to better understand the processes and dynamics that are related to authority, leadership and peace-making: the role of the diasporas – which is the theme of this conference.

As far as we know, you as the members are currently one group, but you may choose to break yourself up into more than one group to work on the task of this event.

We have designated four formal workspaces for you. The Main Parlor, the Dover Parlor, and the sun room off the Dover Parlor are available for working groups. In addition, the conference room at the top of the main stairs is available for inter-group work.

In addition to managing the event, we are also available to provide consultation. As examples, you may think about a consultation to the formation of your particular group, regarding the task of your group, your relationship to other groups, or to a relationship between two or more groups, for example an intergroup event.

You can request consultation at the Management Room which is the Fireside Lounge on the 2nd floor of the main house.

One of the challenges of this event is for members of a group to differentiate. Differentiated work roles and clear delegation of authority are necessary if a group is to have a

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voice that is coherent, both inside and outside the group. This event will provide the opportunity

to experience and reflect on problems involved in working in role, exercising authority on behalf

of others, and delegating to others: in short, problems of management, leadership and

representation.

The freedom that a representative has – to speak for and work on behalf of her or his

group depends on the scope of the delegations the representative has been given by the group.

The scope may be thought of as spanning a continuum from minimal to maximal authority. For

example are you authorized by your group to observe and gather information from these

observations? Or might you be authorized to deliver a message. Or perhaps you may be

authorized to ask a question and gather information. Maximal authority might be that you are to

negotiate on behalf of your group with other groups with full decision-making power.

For this event, we are offering a shared management model. In addition to the two

directors, we are making available a third seat on the management team. This will be a rotating

seat. The seat will be available to any member who is authorized by their group to take up the

role.

This seat is available to the first person who requests it. We are open to this request in the

Management room for the first five minutes of each session. The seat will be available for each

of the Saturday afternoon and evening IE sessions and no member may take up the management

role for more than one session. The third member of the management team may be available to

consult based on the collective decision of the management team.

As you engage in the task of the Institutional Event, the Management Team would

appreciate hearing what you discover in this process and we invite you to develop any working

assumptions about what is going on in the IE and to share those with us. Interactions like this

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will assist us in managing the event and may help you in getting additional insights into your

work.

As the Management staff, we have decided to do our work in public and you are welcome

to observe our work. Perhaps the observation can be of some assistance in informing your own

work. However, we prefer to have **conversations** with you -- about your own experience, and

any working assumptions that you may form about your own group in relation to the emerging

institution.

A few words on the management of boundaries: During the IE in particular, you may

want to pay attention to how the management of the boundaries plays a role in aiding the task.

You will thus have an opportunity to study how boundaries, your own and those established by

others, are regulated and what happens if they are not.

A few final remarks concerning this event: Again, the primary task of this event is to

provide learning opportunities to study the emerging institution and relationships between groups

within it. I invite your thoughtful attention to the freedom and range of options open to you in

this event that were not open to you in the events you have already experienced. You may or

may not choose to exercise these options. But either way, your learning should be enhanced if

you pay attention to your choices.

Ultimately, you are free to do whatever you judge will be best to further your learning.

We are aware that we have given you lots of information for this event. After you have

organized yourselves into one or more groups, feel free to approach the Management Room and

request consultation if you feel that you have missed some information.

The event has now begun.

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APPENDIX N
Post-Conference Evaluation Form[127]
How would you define your ethnicity?

How would you define your religion?

What were your goals in attending this conference?
What did you learn at this conference?
Please use the following 5-point rating scale: 1= very little or none   2 = a little   3 = some   4 = a great deal   5 = a very great deal
1. To what extent did the conference provide the learning opportunities described in the brochure?
        1   2   3   4   5
Comments:

2. To what extent was the conference what you expected it to be?
        1   2   3   4   5
Comments:

3. To what extent have you achieved your goals during the conference?
        1   2   3   4   5
Comments:

4.To what extent did you learn about the ways that leadership and authority emerges and is taken up in groups?   1   2   3   4   5

5. To what extent did each of the following events contribute to your learning:
        1   2   3   4   5
   study groups
        1   2   3   4   5

   inter-group event
     1   2   3   4   5

   review and application (role analysis) sessions
        1   2   3   4   5
Comments:

6. How much have you learned about the Israeli Palestinian conflict?
        1   2   3   4   5

7. How much have you learned about the Israeli narrative of Israeli Palestinian conflict?
        1   2   3   4   5

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[127] [127] Adapted from Patton (2002)

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8. How much have you learned about the Palestinian narrative of Israeli Palestinian conflict?

          1   2   3   4   5

9. To what extent was the learning format/structure of the event appropriate to your level of knowledge and experience?

   Not at all appropriate
   Somewhat appropriate
   Appropriate
   Very appropriate

9. Was there something you wish you had spent more time doing?

10. To what degree has this conference changed your overall understanding of the conflict?   1   2   3   4   5

Comments:

11. To what extent do you think participation in this conference will affect you professionally?   1   2   3   4   5

Comments:

12. To what extent has participation in this conference affected you personally?

     1   2   3   4   5

Comments:

13. To what extent has participation in this conference affected your beliefs/attitudes about the conflict?   1   2   3   4   5

Comments:

14. To what extent have your feelings/attitudes toward your own group been affected by participation in this conference?

     1   2   3   4   5

Comments:

15. To what extent have your feelings/attitudes toward the other group been affected by participation in this conference?

     1   2   3   4   5

Comments:

16. To what extent do you think participation in this conference will affect your activities *within* your own community?

1   2   3   4   5

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Comments:

17. To what extent do you think participation in this conference will affect your activities
    with the other identity group?
                1   2   3   4   5
Comments:

18. How effective did you find the conference directors to be in terms of the following:

    Illuminating the dynamics of the various events you participated in
                    1   2   3   4   5
    Illuminating the dynamics of conflict
                    1   2   3   4   5
    Illuminating the dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict
                    1   2   3   4   5
    Helping you to understand your identity group's role in the conflict
                    1   2   3   4   5
    Helping you to understand the relationship between your conference roles and your
external roles?   1   2   3   4   5

19. How effective was the administration of the conference in terms of the following:
    Responsiveness to your questions about the conference
                    1   2   3   4   5
    Pre-conference administration
                    1   2   3   4   5
        Accommodations
                    1   2   3   4   5
    Comments:

20. What other kinds of experiential learning or dialogue frameworks have you
experienced?

21. Relative to those, how effective did you find this conference to be?
                    1   2   3   4   5   N/A

18. To what extent was your overall experience of the conference worthwhile?
                    1   2   3   4   5

19. What was the most meaningful part of the conference for you? Please explain, if you
are willing:

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21. Would you recommend this conference to others?
        1   2   3   4   5
Why or why not?

22. What, if anything, would you change about this conference?
        1   2   3   4   5

23. Who, or what organization paid for your attendance here?

24. Were you a commuter or residential member?
Commuter
Residential

25. What is the most important lesson you are taking from this conference?

26. If someone asked you to briefly describe what this conference was about, what would you say?

27. If you have other thoughts, comments, or reflections about the conference that you would like to share, please note them here.
General comments:

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APPENDIX O

Three Month Follow-Up Surveys[128]

It has been three months since you've attended *Authority, Leadership, and Peacemaking: The Role of the Diasporas.* We appreciate your taking the time to think back on your conference experience to share with us your experience of the impact of the conference on you over time.

How would you define your ethnicity?

How would you define your religion?

1. To what extent has participation in the conference affected you personally?

           1   2   3   4   5

Comments:

2. To what extent has participation in the conference affected you professionally?

    1   2   3   4   5

Comments:

3. How would you rate your learning in the following areas?

    How I take up authority and leadership
    1   2   3   4   5

    Understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict
    1   2   3   4   5

    Covert or unconscious processes in groups
    1   2   3   4   5

    Covert or unconscious processes in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict
    1   2   3   4   5

    Identity issues
    1   2   3   4   5

    Understanding the role of the Diasporas in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict
    1   2   3   4   5

    Other
    1   2   3   4   5

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[128] Adapted from Patton (2002)

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Comments:

4. To what extent has participation in the conference affected your involvement with your
   own
Community/identity group?

   1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

5. To what extent has participation in the conference affected your involvement with the

other community/identity group?

   1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

6. To what extent has participation in the conference affected your attitudes/feelings
towards
the Palestinian-Israeli conflict?

   1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

7. To what extent has participation in the conference affected your involvement with
activities related to the Israeli Palestinian conflict?
   1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

8. How likely are you to recommend this conference to others?

   1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

9. Please share with us any other thoughts, ideas, comments, or feelings you have had
since the conference about your conference experience that you feel comfortable
disclosing:

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APPENDIX P

Letter of Consent

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study about how participants make meaning of their experience in the conference *Authority, Leadership and Peacemaking: The Role of the Diasporas.* The sole researcher is Tracy Wallach, MSW, who has worked as a clinical social worker and organizational and leadership consultant and is a doctoral candidate at Lesley University.

The purpose of this exploratory study is:
- To explore participants' experience of the conference
- To investigate the impact that the conference experience has had on participants
- To understand what meaning participants make of their conference experience
- To examine how participants make meaning of their experience

Findings from the study will be submitted in a report as part of Tracy Wallach's doctoral dissertation. It may also be published in professional or academic journals. No identifying information will be included in any of these reports. The report of this study will be available for all participants, upon request.

For the purpose of this study, Ms. Wallach would like to interview a selected number of participants who attended the conference. Each volunteer will be interviewed four times, for approximately 60- 90 minutes each time—once just following the conference, and again 3,6, and 12 months later. Ms. Wallach will do all of the interviewing and analysis of information. Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Tapes and transcriptions of the interviews will be stored in a locked file cabinet in Ms. Wallach's home.

Your participation offers you the opportunity to talk about and reflect upon your conference experience, and Ms. Wallach the opportunity to explore how conference participants make meaning of their experience. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you may stop your participation at any time.

Thank you for your participation!

Sincerely yours:

Tracy Wallach

Your signature indicates your understanding of the above and agreement to participate in the study as described.

_____

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APPENDIX Q
Member Interview: immediately post-conference

1. What were your expectations/goals for the conference?

2. To what extent was the conference what you expected it to be?

3. To what extent were the things you were concerned about before the conference occur? Which things occurred, which didn't?

4. How has the conference affected you personally?

5. What changes in yourself do you see as a result of the conference?

6. What would you say you got out of the experience?

7. To what extent do you think this conference will affect you professionally?

8. What was the most meaningful part of the conference for you?
   (e.g., What events at the conference had the most impact on you? Why? What was the high point of the conference for you? What was the low point?)

9. What do you think made the conference have the effects that it did?

10. What is the most important lesson you are taking from the conference?

11. Can you say something about the impact of the shift from staff to membership role on you?

12. Can you say something about your experience in the IE—what group did you choose to be in? why?

13. Say something about your relatedness to your own identity or other identities? And impact of conference on that.

14. What, if anything, do you wish you had done differently?

15. Suppose you were being asked by a government or community/activist group whether or not they should sponsor a conference like this. what would you say? what arguments would you give to support your opinion?

16. Are there any questions I haven't asked that you think I should have? What do you think I should know that I haven't asked you about?

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APPENDIX R
Director Interview: immediately post-conference

1. What were your expectations/goals for the conference?

2. To what extent was the conference what you expected it to be? Likert 1-5—1 is very little)

3. To what extent were the things you were concerned about before the conference occur? Which things occurred, which didn't?

4. To what extent has the conference affected you personally? 1= very little, 5= a very great deal

5. What changes in yourself do you see as a result of the conference?

6. What would you say you got out of the experience?

7. To what extent do you think this conference will affect you professionally? 1= very little, 5= a very great deal

8. What was the most meaningful part of the conference for you?
   (e.g., What events at the conference had the most impact on you? Why?; What was the high point of the conference for you? What was the low point?)

9. What is the most important lesson you are taking from the conference?

10. How much have you learned about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? Israeli narrative? Palestinian narrative?

11. What, if anything, do you wish you had done differently?

12. Are there any questions I haven't asked that you think I should have? What do you think I should know that I haven't asked you about?

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APPENDIX S
Follow-Up Interview[129] **(Three Months)**

This interview is being conducted about three months after your Dialogue conference experience to help us better understand what participants experienced so that we can improve further conferences.

1. Looking back on your conference experience, I'd like to ask you to begin by describing for me what stands out for you about this conference?
    a. What do you remember as the highlight of the conference for you?
    b. What was the low point?

2. How did the conference affect you?
    a. What would you say you got out of the experience?
    b. What changes in yourself do you see or feel as a result of the conference?
    c. How has participation in the conference affected you professionally?
    d. How has participation in the conference affected your involvement with your community?
    e. How has participation in the conference affected your involvement with the other community?

3. How has the conference affected you vis-à-vis the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
    a. How, if at all, has it changed your attitudes/understanding/feelings about the conflict?
    b. How, if at all, has it changed your involvement in activities related to the conflict?

4. How do you think the conference has affected you that we haven't discussed? Which of the things you experienced during the conference carry over to your life since then? What plans have you made, or what actions, if any, have you taken as a result of this conference?

5. What recommendations would you make to improve the conference?

6. Suppose you were being asked by an organization in your community whether or not they should sponsor a conference like this. What would you say? Who shouldn't participate in a conference like this?

7. Are there any questions I haven't asked that you think I should have? What do you think I should know that I haven't asked you about?

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[129] Adapted from Patton (2002)